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VOL. 14 NOVEMBER 1981 NO. 11

OCT 19 '81

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Martha Bayles: Nadine Gordimer's Political Art

Philip Terzian: Debacle in Iran

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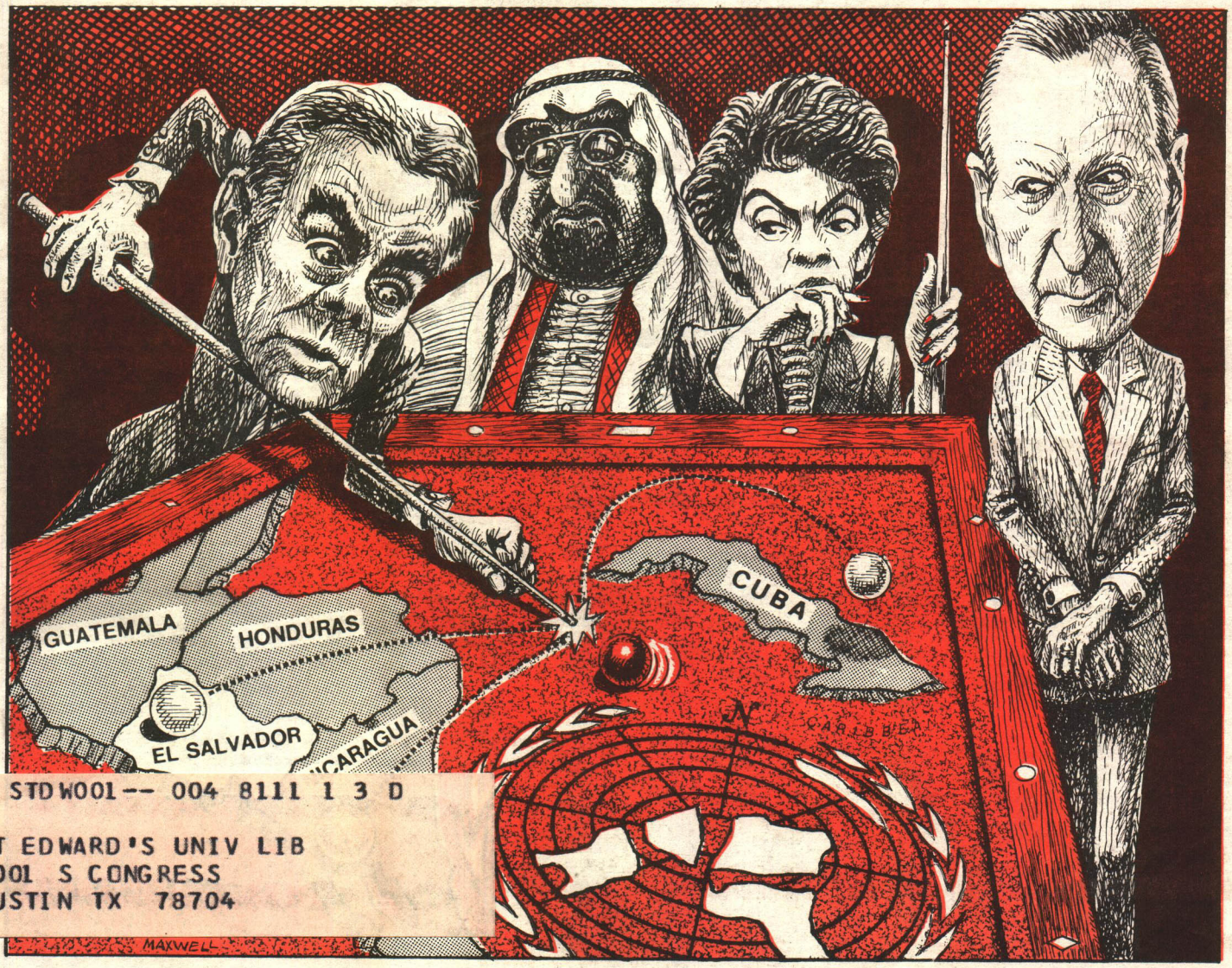

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A MONTHLY REVIEW
EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

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THE CONTINUING CRISIS

• September. And our debonair president continues to smile, but from off stage there are growls and shrieks. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., suave butterball that he is, senses problems looming for the Reaganites, and so does Joseph Kraft. The stock market has gone down. Wall Street is gloomy. These are the signs that Conventional Liberals now take very seriously. Quite possibly, the Great Republic is becoming more conservative.

• Mr. Vernon Jordan, one of the few non-clergy to make a go of it in the modern-day civil rights movement, announced his resignation as president of the National Urban League so that he might take a plush leather chair at the Washington law bordello of Robert Strauss. Rising from humble origins the Urban League became a rococo fount of shaky social science and oddball metaphysics, supplied by a direct pipeline from the U.S. Treasury. In the last year of the Carter administration, the League was provided with more than $110 million in federal grants and contracts for the pursuit of dubious goals through still more dubious means. Now the mountebanks face hard times.

• The singular Miss Lillian, she of the Moon Pie regime of yesteryear, has confided to an interviewer from *McCall's* that Mrs. Reagan is "ruining" the White House. Miss Lillian did not divulge her sources; however, it is known that the whole Carter family has viewed with horror reports that Nancy Reagan is heading a counterrevolution at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Ever since January 20 bed sheets have been changed daily. Flies and mice have been executed. Worse still, under the new regime toilets are being flushed! Yet vestiges of the Old Order remain. Late in the month a White House guard was charged with armed robbery after allegedly holding up a Laurel, Maryland bank. Friends of poesy were ebullient when the poet James E. Lewisohn was released from prison in the very same week that one of his powerful, brutal, truthful, yet disgusting and compassionate poems appeared in the *New Yorker*. Mr. Lewisohn, a convicted uxoricide, had served over six years of his life sentence before a proper court could be found to grant him a retrial. And joy made a rare appearance at the office of the *New York Review of Books* when that sepulchral journal's latest good cause, Mr. Jack Henry Abbott, was arrested in Morgan City, Louisiana, unharmed and still in command of his amazing literary faculties. Since absconding from the scene of a murder last summer, the author of *In the Belly of the Beast* has turned out two more interesting letters, and with yet another murder to his account devotees of jailbird chic will be following his incarceration with high expectations. Finally, from Tama, Iowa comes word that the friends of Mr. Ed Haberman are again asking the famed collector to turn over at least part of his collection of old rags to New York's Museum of Modern Art. The Haberman collection, which includes over 13,000 rags some of which are unbelievably dirty, has been accumulating since the 1950s, and there can be no doubt that almost any pile now in the Haberman garage or basement would make a tasteful complement to almost any room in the MOMA.

• In Rotherham, England, English Naderites were scandalized when the winner of their safe-driving award, truck driver Michael Hill, drank himself to death during a reception in his honor. Of course, Mr. Hill cannot be blamed. He drank 20 pints of beer in three grueling hours with these goody-goodies. A less civilized man might have shot himself and, if he were a patriot, taken a few of his hosts along with him. From behind the barbed wire, America's cowed and starving women let out an appreciative bleat when on September 25 Mrs. Sandra Day O'Connor became the first woman to sit on the Supreme Court. Of course, there exists no compelling proof that Judge O'Connor is a woman. No feminists were allowed to question the former Arizona appellate court judge. In Judiciary Committee hearings Judge O'Connor offered no evidence, and from transcripts of the hearings it is clear that no senator even asked her. San Franciscans were stunned when the leaders of that city's National Organization for Women resigned claiming that the group has been taken over by the revolutionary Socialist Workers Party, a misfortune that has also befallen NOW chapters in Los Angeles and New Jersey. And in Salisbury, Zimbabwe, the government unveiled a new Zimbabwean coat of arms displaying a hoe and a Soviet-designed AK-47 assault weapon.

• Poland continued to bubble and to broil throughout the month, yet the Polish trade union, Solidarity, actually wrested some genuine freedoms from the Polish government as the Russians scowled. On September 25, the government agreed to worker self-management at non-strategic factories. A development as yet little noted is the growing charm accruing to the word solidarity. If the phenomenon continues, Solidarity could become the eponym for hundreds of American staples: a new dance, a special cut of blue jeans, colognes, the list is endless. Already the word is being hijacked by such clever operators as the New Age clergy, homosexual lobbyists, aggrieved fat people; and on September 19 an agglutination of these suffering situations latched onto the American labor movement and held a carnival in Washington, D.C., to notify President Reagan that at least they want to continue taxing themselves to death through the mysterious ritual of inflation rather than practice chill economies. They called their revival Solidarity Day.

• *Harper's* magazine announced that Michael Kinsley, formerly of the *New Republic*, will replace Lewis Lapham as editor, and *Oui* has suffered catastrophe. Last month its editors, all highly trained students of the female genitalia, were forced to acknowledge that they had been hoodwinked by pictures of the beautiful Miss Tula. Morever, it is now too late to pull them from the December issue. Miss Tula, before her appointment at the abattoir, was actually Mr. Barry Cossey. *Oui* connoisseurs have been duped by doctors practicing the plastic arts!

• The Right Rev. George Hunt, Episcopal bishop of some 43,000 Rhode Islanders, gave the heathens hope when he urged his parishioners to oppose efforts to proscribe abortion lest anti-abortion laws pass and Episcopalians lose "their God-given duty to make responsible choices"—an admirable elocution whose logical conclusion is eminently desirable, namely: the retirement of gasbags like the Right Rev. Hunt. In Westchester, New York, the unusual features of Mrs. Lara Florio brought her to grief when her husband Emanuel mistook her for a woodchuck and shot her as he "got a glimpse of the back of her head" during a hunting outing. Mrs. Florio was taken to a nearby hospital where she was listed in stable condition by her veterinarian.

• Mr. Truman Capote has again crashed to the floor. The resilient novelist, who made a similar trip last month, is beginning to spend so much time on public floors that it might be apropos for him to carry a scrub brush somewhere on his person the next time he goes out. And finally it is possible to end an installment of the Continuing Crisis on a cheerful note. In Iran, where the mullahs and their dirty-necked galoots continue to bump each other off with holy savagery, it was announced that dissident leftists are forming suicide squads. Allah be praised!

—*RET*

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WHILE GERMANY SLEEPS

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr

BONN, West Germany—Every now and again it is balm for the spirit to loosen one's tie, uncork a jug, and ventilate a hush-hush fact of life. Having just endured a conference on West Germany's place in the Atlantic alliance, which resounded with the solemn pronouncements of American and German notables, I find it is time to ventilate: Let's face it, the only time alliance with the Europeans is not maddeningly difficult is when the Europeans are dependent on our troops and factories to liberate them, village by village, from the inescapable consequences of their diplomatic blunders.

Otherwise they are either fretting that we have put too much firepower into Europe or too little. During most of the postwar period the Europeans have been repining that the United States was either drawing them into hostilities remote from their interests or was about to abandon them to the mercies of the Soviets. They are rarely content.

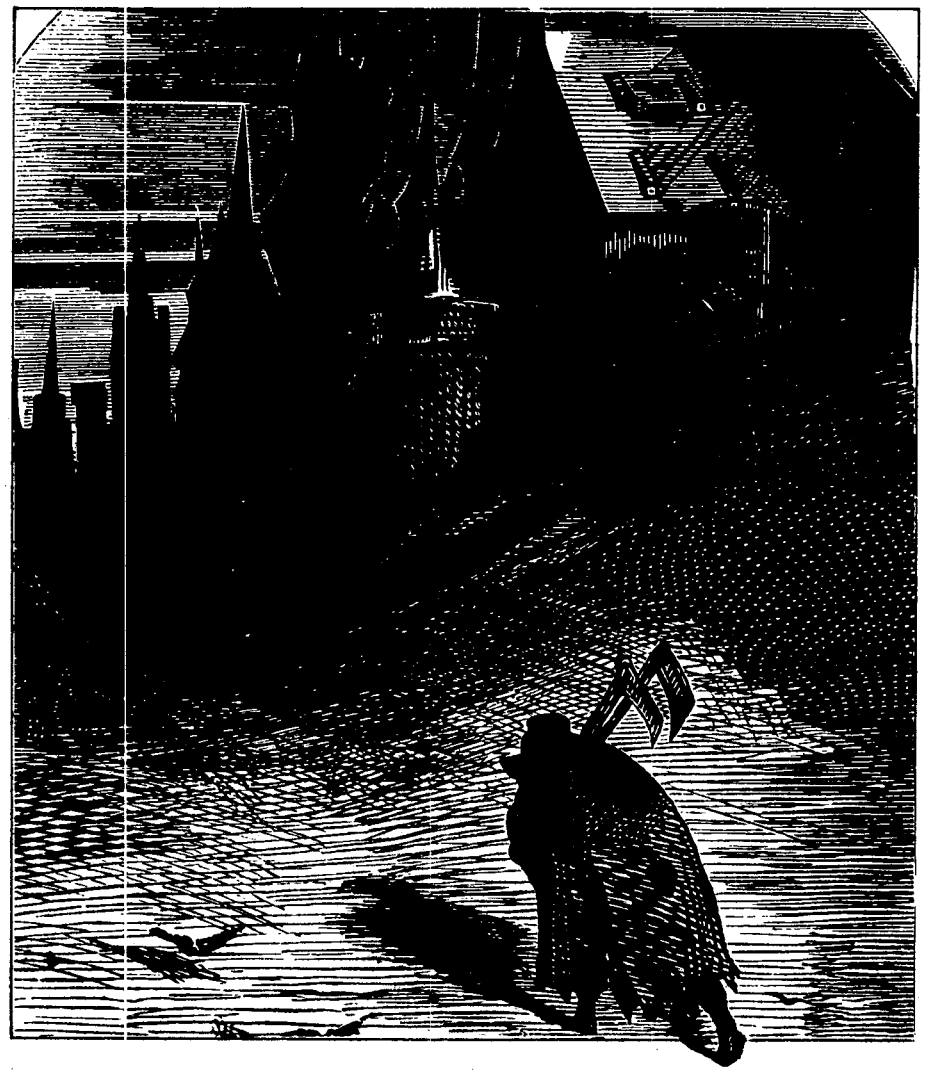
Under the Carter administration they could barely restrain their contempt for American softness; today many of the Europeans remonstrate with us for our toughness—and in oratory far more heated than the restrained peeps they reserve for that nation to their east, which has festooned their borders with armor, missiles, and troops.

This skittishness is now rampant in Germany where there is everywhere a surprising fear of war. Bear in mind this is not Poland. This is the country whose Social Democratic Party has since the last decade supposedly ingratiated itself with the Soviets through *Ostpolitik*. It has cultivated a flourishing trade with the Eastern bloc. Yet now its luminaries are in the mulligrubs.

They talk of imminent war, but they do not attribute it to the failures of *Ostpolitik*. Nor do they attribute it to the presence of those SS-20 missiles that the Soviets inexplicably unveiled some years ago. No, they seem to lay the blame for this turn of events on the people who would place medium range missiles on their soil to protect them from those SS-20s, to wit: *die Amerikaner*.

As the Germans see it there is bound to be a nuclear exchange between the United States and the Soviets. The theater of operations will be Germany, and—or so the legend has it—once the United States and the USSR have turned Germany into a bed of cinders, both sides will shake hands and turn their minds to more cheerful matters. Why they think such an exchange would stop with the destruction of Germany is a mystery, but after sitting through last month's conference I can tell you that these fears are held even by influential figures beyond the Social Democratic Party. Conservatives too believe in this moonshine.

It is of course not unusual for Germans to be driven by foreign policy delusions, but it is unusual for their delusions to drive them toward enervation and pacifism. Nonetheless this is definitely the direction in which the Germans are now moving. Somewhat reminiscent of the despair that afflicted the diplomacy of the Carter administration, the Germans look up from their schnitzel, behold the unruly brutes arrayed on their eastern borders, and murmur "there is nothing that can be done about it."



Now influential voices high in the esteem of Social Democrats, like Peter Bender, urge that Western Europe break with the United States and adopt a policy of appeasement toward the USSR. The idea seems to be that if the sheep refuse to protect themselves the wolves will not eat them. Rather the wolves will rush on and attack the better-armed creatures across the Atlantic. It is, of course, a policy of escapism. The Germans live with Russian tanks along their borders. They do not live in Australia, and the only influence they have over those tanks comes from a strong, prudent Atlantic alliance.

To some degree the growing enervation in Germany is a legacy of the vacillating policy of the Carter administration. To some degree it is a consequence of our shabby treatment of our erstwhile Southeast Asian allies. The Germans do not want to be the next boat people. They doubt our resolution. Despite all the transatlantic exchanges that have been fostered by European and American groups, the Germans' understanding of us is not terribly sound; and for that matter our understanding of them is often defective.

Nonetheless, the United States has come to the assistance of Europeans on no less than three occasions in this century: Two world wars and the unprecedented Marshall Plan. In those days we were militarily and culturally far less prepared to involve ourselves in Europe than today. It is time the Europeans realized that we have been their good friends. Indeed we have been their best friends, and they will find none better. □

Adapted from RET's weekly column syndicated by King Features.

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THE SIDEWALKS OF ROME

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

ROME—Here in the Eternal City people heave things from first, second, third, and fourth story windows. Why they do this I cannot say, but as one walks the streets, especially in the evening, one is in constant peril of having savory debris bounced off his head; occasionally worrisome liquids wash across the shoulders. Does this mean that Romans abandon the streets at night? Not at all. They walk the streets in gay hordes, but they do take precautions. In fact, as Luigi Barzini wrote in his elegant meditation, *The Italians,* the seemingly casual Italians behave with the utmost caution.

Last month, I walked to and from a host of meetings with Roman notables all eager to explain to me the dark inscrutables of a nation whose people are one of Europe's most self-reliant, though their government is a paradigm for chaos. And as my laundry bill increased I came to the conclusion that any political analysis of Italy has to take into account the insidious windows of Rome. Most Romans are intelligent and live in dignity. They walk the streets, generally without incident. Nonetheless, one can walk the street at night and suddenly, splat, the walker whom fate has fingered finds himself dripping with, say, fettucini in a nice cream sauce.

Right now, as Italians settle back into the daily grind after their traditional August holidays, there is a sense of foreboding. The economy is suffering an acute case of encephalitis lethargica: inflation at nearly 21 percent, industrial production down by 5.4 percent since last August, 1.5 million unemployed, the lira on the run, a projected government deficit of $31.2 billion, and a very bearish stock market. Terrorism from the Left and the Right is in somewhat of a remission, though corpses do continue

(*continued on page 42*)

CAPITOL IDEAS

SOLIDARNOŚĆ USURPED

by Tom Bethell

The United Food and Commercial Worker's Union, the largest in the AFL-CIO with 1.4 million members, took out a quarter-page ad in the *Washington Post* on the day before Solidarity Day, the occasion of Lane Kirkland's mass rally on the Mall in Washington, D.C. The first paragraph of the advertisement's text informed readers that "SOLIDARNOSC means 'Solidarity' in Polish. Most Americans associate that word with the courageous struggle of the Polish Solidarity Union movement to establish the first free trade unions in a Communist country."

The ad then pointed out that "our primary concern on [Solidarity] day will not be the rights and well being of Polish workers. Rather, our members are responding to AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland's leadership in calling the Solidarity Day demonstration to show the concern of American workers for their rights and well being here in America."

Likening those who enjoy the privileges of membership in an American trade union to Polish citizens (amounting to almost one-third of the population) who have shown the courage to defy government power and the threat of Soviet tanks hardly bears examination. U.S. trade union members are a privileged group because, by a combination of legal protection, coercion, and threatened violence, they are able to extract from employers wages that are higher than the market would otherwise pay. Union labor is priced out of the market and then shoved back in again by force. The main effect of this is to create unemployment on the margins and fringes of the economy. Those who are both unemployed and genuinely seeking employment (no doubt a minority of the statistically unemployed) have trade unions and minimum wage laws to thank.

Trade unions are in rhetoric directed against "management." But in practice they are legal conspiracies, specifically exempted from prosecution under antitrust laws, against other workers known as "scabs," who might do the same work at the market price for labor. When you see workers parading about with picket signs saying that such-and-such a company is "unfair to labor," the true message that is being transmitted is to non-union workers: Don't try to take our jobs while we're on strike or we'll break a few bones. It is union strikers themselves who really are "unfair to labor," because they are in reality doing nothing more than protecting a privileged position.

Technically, striking private-sector union employees *can* be replaced by non-union workers, but in practice this very rarely happens. For one thing, the National Labor Relations Board can rule that the strike involved "unfair labor practices" and thus "disqualify" such non-union hiring. In such ways the unions' labor monopoly is preserved. In addition, of course, there are the ugly midnight telephone calls, the threatened and actual violence which back up the lawyer's rulings.

How different is the situation in Poland! What we have been seeing there is a national rebellion against socialism—a system where the state is the sole employer, the only landlord, the owner of "the means of

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production," and so on. (Some people call this "Communism" but those who rule over such societies *call it "socialism"* and so let us use their term.)

Socialism is a system in which *all* workers are at the mercy of an all-encompassing state tyranny. This is called "workers' control," "power to the workers," and so on. In the past 18 months in Poland, there has appeared a national uprising whose goal is to wrest some of this power and decision-making away from the state and restore it to individuals. Lech Walesa has emerged as the leader of this movement, and he has (in an astute rhetorical maneuver) called Solidarity a "trade union" movement. It is, of course, a genuine workers' movement, to the eternal disgrace of Karl Marx. But it is not a trade union movement as that term is understood in the West. U.S. trade unions are pockets of privilege expressly granted by the state, thus extensions of state power. Walesa's Solidarity is an attempt to fragment and disperse state power. The Soviet news agency Tass has accused Solidarity of harboring "antisocialist elements," and for once Tass is right.

As I walked down to the Mall, the better to observe Lane Kirkland's Solidarity Day, I reflected that it was really nothing more than an attempt to cash in on the prestige of the eponymous Polish movement by a group that sees its privileges threatened. ("You like Solidarity? Then you should like us too because we are unions and we are here for Solidarity Day.")

Solidarity Day: The AFSCME fatties were billowing out of their buses, some with "Parade Marshal" or "Captain" on their arm bands, some wearing peaked caps and insignia, directing their troops across the road. Our public servants were up off their bottoms and enjoying it, happy to be out in the open air, at last imbued with a sense of mission and purpose; away for a day from the dull routine of bureaucratic obstruction that is the soul of the public employee's daily routine; at large with a cause and a placard:

Ronald Reagan
3rd Rate President
2nd Rate Actor
1st Rate Scab

The parade was beginning to take shape and form into a line on Constitution Avenue. Another placard read: "Want to Outsmart the Russians? Restore Reagan's Education Cuts." (Chicago Teacher's Union—AFT)

"Save OSHA for Health and Safety." (Printing and Graphic Communications Union)

"Stop Natural Gas Decontrol." (Graphic Arts Union)

"Ronnie Hood Steals From the Poor and Gives to the Rich." (American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees)

In addition, there were numerous placards held aloft urging passage of something called the "equal rights amendment" (which I believe has something to do with finding work for unemployed lawyers).

Anyway, you may notice that the common theme of all these messages is the demand that the power of government be increased. At whose *expense*? That was the question that nagged at my mind. Unbuttoned, unplacarded, un-organized, and un-unionized, I suspected I knew the answer. I watched another group of AFSCME protestors struggle to their feet from the picnic area before setting off on the march. How distasteful they seemed, conveying as they did an unmistakable sense of bitterness toward America—an angry, self-righteous resolve both to bite the hand that fed them and simultaneously demand they be fed larger and more frequent helpings.

I watched them disposing of their picnic boxes, many of them containing one or even two pieces of completely untouched fried chicken; it then occurred to me that if only a few of the Polish Solidarity members could have seen this good food thrown away they would have understood how feloniously their name had been taken by these querulous, bitter, cantankerous, overfed public payrollers.

The increase of state power is the road to socialism, and this march, I felt, was little more than socialism on parade, U.S.-style. (Of course, you don't see the word "socialism" in America very often now that the Soviet Union has so rudely appropriated it. What you do see are such slogans as "gay rights," "equal rights," "human rights," "preserving the environment," "social justice," "social change," and frequent uses of the word "building," as in "building a new society.")

Then there were the speeches. An announcer told the assembly that "the speakers will be expressing your desire for a concerned responsible government." Monsignor George Higgins said a prayer for "justice and equity" (the new word for equality), while the sober-suited Lane Kirkland spoke eloquently of the need "to reaffirm the great goals that have drawn us together in solidarity," of "the rapacity of commercial enterprise," of his sense that "only the state faithfully expresses your will not to destroy the programs that feed the roots of a decent society," and of his desire to "build a new mandate." Benjamin Hooks probably entered your homes via television with his observation that "in the name of fighting inflation the necessities of life are taken from the needy and given to the greedy," and he subsequently expressed his opposition to "turning the clock back." (Does that mean it is impermissible to correct mistakes?)

The sheer decibel-level of the amplification prevented me from understanding most of what Mrs. Smeal had to say about the relationship between women and the state, but I believe she would like state-sponsored privileges to be extended to the entire regiment of women. While she spoke, I contented myself with perusing an armful of literature I had picked up en route. The *Daily World* had an article by the chairman of the Communist Party USA which I quickly glanced over, while the *Socialist Worker* is here to tell us that "socialism means freedom" (1984 is not far off), and that "we must begin to build for it."

Worker's World ("workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!"), published in New York, editorially confirmed my suspicions that Solidarity was one thing but SOLIDARNOSC another:

> The truth is that the activities of Solidarity, the so-called independent union in Poland, are *against* the interests of the Polish workers and will untimately lead to a restoration of capitalist exploitation and imperialist oppression. Why else would the labor-hating Wall Street Journal support them?

And from the same publisher (World View Publishers), I purchased a handy little booklet entitled *Czechoslovakia: 1968 An Account of the Attempt to Restore Capitalism Under Cover of "Liberal Reform."* The attempt, as we know, failed, and such may also be the fate of the Polish attempt if the warning by *Challenge* ("published by the Progressive Labor Party in New York") is heeded. Under the heading "Poland Quagmire," the editorial writer noted that:

> The struggle for political power inside Poland has sharpened up. The pro Western imperialist forces centered around the Solidarity union have used the recently concluded Solidarity convention in Gdansk to step up their plans to seize power . . . The only solution to the situation in Poland is socialist revolution. The Solidarity movement does not reflect this in any way. Otherwise how could the U.S. imperialists, the foes of all the world's workers, stand and cheer on the sidelines for strikes and other political developments in Poland.

Very interesting, especially those revealing words, "pro-Western." As Eleanor Smeal continued to bellow into the microphone, I couldn't help wondering how much she—and some of the other speakers on the platform—would, deep down in their hearts concur with the editorial sentiments of *Challenge* and *Worker's World*. I am, at any rate, fairly sure that they would agree with just about everything else published in these more-than-normally candid publications. □

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Walter Berns

WHERE THE MAJORITY RULES: A UN DIARY

How I spent my summer vacation.

Early June: I am asked whether I would be willing to serve as the American "expert" in a United Nations Seminar on the Relations that exist between Human Rights, Peace, and Development. (Actually, my caller begins by asking whether I would be willing to kill two weeks in New York in early August.) The Seminar, he explains, is one of those UN functions whose establishment the United States votes against but, when outvoted, it feels obliged to attend, the principle being that a no-vote is better than no vote. I protest that I hope to be in Maine in August and, in any case, in August I would prefer to be anywhere other than New York; he replies that I should look upon this as a form of national service. Besides, he adds, since the appointment would be made by the UN Commission on Human Rights, I would receive the UN per diem allowance which is somewhat more generous than the American (even though the money comes from the same source, us). Warming up to his task, he leads me to believe that if I stay at a modest hotel—he must have had in mind the YMCA—I might break even. Well, with one thing or another, it proves to be an offer I cannot refuse.

June 22: Today I receive from Geneva a formal notice of my appointment. The Director of the UN's Division of Human Rights writes that participants in the seminar are expected to contribute working papers "approximately ten quarto-sized, double-spaced typewritten pages in length," which papers will be translated, reproduced, and distributed "in advance of the Seminar, if possible."

July 1: A packet arrives from Geneva containing three working papers: one from the Soviet participant (44 pages) detailing the life-long human rights work of Mr. Brezhnev; one from the Indian (55 pages); and one from the Norwegian (85 pages). The Norwegian is not a participant, although he will participate; he is a "consultant" employed by the Seminar; reading his paper, I wonder if consultants are reimbursed on a per page rather than on a per diem basis. All three papers indicate that there has been a marked improvement in the "overall global human rights situation" in recent years; proof of this is to be found in the number of UN declarations on the subject.

July 15: I finish a ten quarto-sized (actually a ten 8½ x 11 sized) page double-spaced typewritten paper and send it off to Geneva. In it, among other things, I point out that I don't think the "overall global human rights situation" is actually so hotsy-totsy. "Billions of the world's peoples," I write, "are being governed without their consent, millions are being systematically and deliberately annihilated, hundreds of thousands are crowding fearfully into the flimsiest of vessels and fleeing the lands of their births, millions more see their homelands suddenly and viciously occupied by an army launched by a neighboring state, while, across a continent, another people trembles at the prospect of being invaded—because they had committed the horrendous mistake of forming a free trade union!—by troops launched by that same friendly neighbor, and so on." Where, I ask, is the evidence of an improved human rights situation? "Iran? El Salvador?"

August 3: I arrive at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations (otherwise known as USUN), am assigned an office and an "alternate participant," who is a foreign service officer and a UN veteran; he will act as a kind of shepherd for me. When leaving the Mission to cross the street for the opening session, we run into one of our UN ambassadors, a friend from Washington, who gives me an idea of the importance generally attached to the Seminar by greeting me with the words, "What in the hell are you doing here?" It is a blistering day, so it is a relief to leave USUN, where Jimmy Carter's thermostat rules are still in effect, for the General Assembly Building, where the temperature is kept at a comfortable 72 degrees. My shepherd introduces me to a number of my fellow participants who prove to be not "experts" at all but members of their various countries' UN missions; in fact, the only other country that appointed an "expert" is the Soviet Union, which named its "Director of the Institute of State and Law of the Academy of Sciences." He is accompanied by a short chap with dark glasses who, I presume, is the KGB agent. Since under the prevailing alphabetical seating rules we are placed next to the Soviet delegation, the four of us are soon engaged in an exchange of pleasantries. The same cannot be said of the situation with our neighbors on our

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right, the PLO, with whom, my shepherd informs me, we do not speak and *must* not be photographed. The PLO, along with SWAPO, the African National Congress, and the Pan African Congress, is present as an observer, one of the "Liberation Movements" recognized by the UN. My shepherd, who has an eye for such details, notices that the alphabetical rules have been violated in the seating of the observers; a quiet word with some UN functionary leads to a rearrangement of the plastic name cards and a reshuffling of the observing delegations. We end up with the African National Congress on our right.

The first order of business and, as it turns out, the morning's only business, is the election of the Seminar's officers, all of whom are elected unanimously. The chairman (or, as the Australian participant, a woman, will insist on saying, the chairperson) is from Sri Lanka, the rapporteur is a charming lawyer from Sierra Leone, and there are three vice-chairmen: one from the Soviet bloc (Bulgaria), one from the Third World (Cuba, formally nominated by Mexico), and one from the WEOG (the Western European and others group). By some alchemy that I do not understand, we decide that WEOG's vice-chairman must be the participant from Finland; unfortunately, due to the air controllers' strike, he has not yet arrived. Belgium, speaking on behalf of the WEOG, asks the chair if the election of the third vice-chairman can be delayed pending his arrival. None of this matters so nobody objects. We adjourn for lunch, which I take with a USUN friend in the UN cafeteria where prices seem to have been set in the late 1950s and, perhaps in an effort to refute Milton Friedman, not changed since. We reconvene 30 minutes late—every session begins at least 30 minutes late—and spend the afternoon adopting the agenda and deciding, despite the wishes of Kenya who prefers that we be divided into three discussion groups, to do our business in plenary sessions. As France points out, most delegations consist of only two members and some of only one, and neither two nor one is divisible by three. A very sensible observation, but what the decision will mean is that there will be nothing resembling discussion, merely one speech after another.

August 4: The WEOG vice-chairman is elected unanimously. The chairman delivers his opening lecture and sets the tone of the Seminar by saying that it is "cynical to speak of civil rights to a poor and hungry man." The rapporteur follows by reciting a long list of UN declarations on human rights, peace, and development, and contradicts the chairman, whether knowingly or not I don't know, by saying that "people living in freedom are likely to work harder and thereby contribute to development." Cyprus is next; after congratulating each of the officers on his election to an important post in this important Seminar, he drones on until 12:10. Since no one else indicated a desire to speak, we adjourn until 3 p.m. During lunch I am informed by a USUN friend that it costs $400 to publish one page of an official UN document. This includes the cost of translation and distribution; it also represents more than twice the annual per capita income of some countries. We reconvene shortly after 3:30 and spend a few hours listening to India, the USSR, France, and the Norwegian consultant congratulate the officers on their election and speak of the interrelation of human rights, peace, and development. Everyone speaks of a right to development, so I raise my hand, which, when noted by the secretary, will earn me a place on the list of speakers. In due course, I speak my piece: Development is not a right but a necessity. To say that the 780 million people living in absolute poverty have a right to development suggests that they are poor because they are not developed (which is true), and that they are not developed because someone—guess who—is denying them this right. And to say (as every other speaker does) that the human right to develop is a right possessed by collectivities as well as individuals is merely to invite the governments of those collectivities to violate individual rights. For example, a government might decide that agricultural development can best take place through collectivization and then seize all private farms. This is likely to be resisted by the dispossessed farmers, who will then be dealt with harshly; in fact, they will be killed. And why not? The right to develop includes a right to the means of development as well as the right to decide on which means are appropriate or necessary. Thus, in this case, the UN would be sanctioning the elimination of the farmers. (A half hour later the "distinguished participant from the USSR" will take exception to my remarks, but I will lean over and say, innocently, that I didn't mention the Soviet Union or even utter the word "kulaks.") The Norwegian consultant says he is for human rights and peace and development, urges us to "embrace all three and to rise above them," and says there must be a "comprehensive redistribution" of income, which, of course, is what this seminar is really about.

August 5: Morocco identifies Israel as the world's chief villain. Bulgaria tells us that the "great October Revolution opened up a new epoch for human rights," and that individual rights cannot be separated from collective human rights. He concludes by calling on "some countries" to transfer wealth to the poor. Cuba, who, after Algeria, will prove to be the nastiest participant, says there is no possibility of tension between individual and collective rights; Prime Minister Castro solved this problem when he said the UN must recognize the rights of mankind. He spends the next 15 minutes denouncing me. In my working paper, I had criticized the idea that human rights can be declared into existence by the UN; what the UN can give, I wrote, the UN can take away (which it now proposes to do with freedom of the press). In any case, it is simply foolish to suggest that one can discover his human rights by telephoning the UN Secretariat. (Dial a human right?) Cuba's answer to this is that, unlike 1945, the UN now represents the majority of the world's people, so it can say what human rights are—and the United States better get used to it. Syria denounces Israel, and we adjourn for lunch. Resuming at 3:40, Czechoslovakia, in the person of a rather attractive young woman, gives its version of the Soviet line, but gives it in English. Ireland, in an eloquent speech, reminds us that this is supposed to be a seminar of experts, and that "we don't come here with instructions in our pockets"; this is followed by a series of speeches—by Algeria, Belgium, Senegal, Kenya, Australia, and then the World Council of Churches which has no instructions be-

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cause it has no government to issue them. The day ends with a passionate speech by the PLO; it appears that "almost all the miseries in the world, during the past 200 years, have been caused by capitalism."

August 6: The chairman tells us that "fruitful discussion has taken place." In the afternoon, Senegal, the World Council of Churches, and the USSR call for disarmament.

August 7: I put in an appearance at the appointed hour merely to see if anyone else is present; the only person in the chamber is the representative of the African National Congress. He is reading the *New York Times*. In the course of the day, Romania, Morocco, Egypt, Finland, Ireland, Australia ("Thank you, Mr. Chairperson"), Costa Rica, and Kenya deplore the arms race. Kenya also thanks the USSR for the most appropriate gift ever given to the UN and the world; it seems that some years ago, the Soviets installed a piece of sculpture in the UN garden depicting the beating of a sword into a plowshare. Cuba follows with a vituperative speech calling upon the United States to beat *its* sword into a plowshare. We adjourn one hour and fifteen minutes early, being told by the chairman that it has been an arduous week. That evening my wife calls me from Mount Desert Island to say that Maine is very pleasant.

I spend the weekend writing my objections to the Seminar's report, which, of course, I have not yet seen because it is not yet written.

August 10: The week begins (37 minutes late) with a long speech by the Soviet Union calling upon the UN to ban production of the neutron bomb (which, over the weekend, the United States said it was going to produce and deploy), and calling upon the United States to ratify SALT II. He also says the UN should establish the new International Economic Order (a code term for massive redistribution of wealth from us to the developing nations), adopt the resolutions on mass communications (a code term for restrictions on the freedom of the press), and promote research on the relations between human rights and peace; the results of this research are to be given to students. (I note that in addressing the participants he always says "gentlemen," which must make Australia squirm.) Nigeria recommends that we denounce colonialism, neo-colonialism (and I remind him of quasi-colonialism), imperialism, and racism. China, in its first utterance of the Seminar, adds hegemonism to the list. Cuba calls for a "massive transfer of resources to the developing countries and complete forgiveness of debts accumulated in the past." This strikes most seminarians as a good idea. The World Jewish Congress speaks on behalf of Israel. We adjourn an hour-and-a-half before the scheduled 6 p.m. closing.

August 11: The Indian participant sweeps in, clad in still another dazzling sari. This reminds me of the story in the *Times* today; it seems that in India, which, of course, has signed the UN convention on women's rights, women can still be bought and sold on the open market. I resist the temptation to ask India about this. During the morning session we listen to many speeches, including one from the Bahai International Community. The Soviet Union leans over to ask, "Vat's Bahai?" I tell him it's a religious organization and he smiles condescendingly. In the afternoon, I point out that everyone present, even the Soviet Union, is for human rights, although Marx himself had nothing but contempt for the very idea of rights; that it is foolish to think that we can agree on a report because we have incompatible ideas on what these rights are. Some of us, I point out, say human rights are those natural rights delineated by the political philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and those that are reasonably derived from them; others say that a human right is any desired good—development, for example—that the UN transforms into a right; still others define as a human right whatever their own governments are prepared to grant, such as free dental care (or as Clifford Orwin and Thomas Pangle put it mischievously in a recent paper, free *bad* dental care). As for what the peoples of the world think about human rights, I suggest we look at the countries people escape from, or try to escape from, and the countries they escape to, or try to escape to. This right to emigrate, I say, is derived from the fundamental natural right not to be governed without one's consent. If this right is secured, the civil rights (the right to speak, to vote governments out of office, to acquire, possess, and pass on to one's heirs the property one earns by the sweat of one's brow or the acuity of one's brain, and to associate in free trade unions, etcetera) are likely to be secured. The truth of this was demonstrated in America by an egregious denial of rights: I refer, of course, to the failure to afford black Americans the opportunity to vote for or against the Constitution in 1787-8. The consequence was a denial of their right to be part of the constitutional majorities that governed the country, and it is not surprising that, until after the Civil War, they did not enjoy civil rights. That is why we in the liberal democracies attach so much importance to this right to be governed only with consent. In fact, of course, we all know that human rights properly understood are best secured in liberal democracies, and that liberal democracies are the most developed; as for peace, it is worth pointing out that there has never been a war between two liberal democracies. This ought to form the basis of our report on the relation of human rights, peace, and development; better that than a listing of demands which we call rights and which, as Ambassador Kirkpatrick said recently [and she picked it up from that Orwin and Pangle paper], may be likened to letters to Santa Claus. I have news for the participants of this Seminar: There ain't no Santa Claus. And if the report is going to contain a condemnation of Israel, honesty requires us to point out that Jordan has killed more Palestinians, that Syria has killed more Palestinians, than has the state of Israel. Finally, although I cannot speak for the government of the United States, I think the record shows that it stands ready to assist any country that demonstrates its willingness to use assistance in a way calculated to foster development. Bulgaria, Australia, India, and Cuba deplore my letters to Santa Claus allusion. Cuba points out (unnecessarily, I think) that property rights are "out of fashion" at the UN. As for this immigration business, he asks, what is it in fact? "A brains drain." The United States only takes the doctors and scientists educated in the poor countries. As for freedom of the press, why has the American press paid no attention to this Seminar? (I could have told him, because they're all in Maine.)

At 5:26, the PLO begins a violent speech and suddenly the Seminar becomes interesting. He makes a deprecatory reference to the Camp David accords, and Egypt bangs on the table and shouts, "*Pointe d'ordre! Pointe d'ordre!*" She insists that Camp David is not on the agenda. It seems, however, that points of order are not allowed in a seminar, but, then, what we are engaged in cannot fairly be described as a seminar. The chairman seems to be aware of this because he asks the PLO to confine his remarks to agenda items, and Egypt settles back in her chair. I decide that this is fun, so when the PLO, without referring to Camp David, launches a tirade against Israel, I pull out the plastic name card—"the United States of America"—and begin pounding on the table. Israel, I say, is not on the agenda. This produces some consternation among the participants

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because most of them are of the opinion that Israel (along with South Africa and American wealth) *is* the agenda. Still, I am sustained by the chair. But this has no effect on the PLO who, of course, has only one speech in his repertory, and when he continues his denunciation of Israel, I again bang with the name card. Under what conditions, I ask, are observers permitted to speak? At the pleasure of the official participants, I am told. Well, if it comes to a vote, I am sure to lose, so I, too, settle back in my chair. When the tirade resumes, I gather up my papers and walk out, which, I confess, gives me some pleasure: The United States walks out (even though, of course, as an independent "expert" I am not representing the United States). Back in the USUN, I report all this to my shepherd (who, wisely, no longer bothers to accompany me to these sessions); he says I must be late to the next day's session to make it clear that my departure was not required by the need to attend to one of nature's functions. I point out that it is not easy to be late; one has to be later, and that is not readily accomplished. It is decided that he will take my place for the first hour tomorrow, which has the further advantage of allowing me to be absent when the Soviet Union replies to my speech.

August 12: I arrive at noon and am told by my shepherd that the time was given over entirely to the USSR's reply to me. On the table there is a set of draft recommendations, fifty-odd in number and largely repetitive, since it is largely a compilation of recommendations made by the various participants. France makes the reasonable suggestion that there should be a drafting committee, but Nigeria says there is no time for that. We adjourn to confer privately on the question of whether there is time for a drafting committee. When reconvened, various participants argue over who possesses the collective right to development: Algeria insists it is the states, Australia prefers communities, Cuba agrees with Algeria but nevertheless fancies the term "peoples." Aware that we are not making progress and that time is running out, we agree that the rapporteur should return in the afternoon with a two- or three-page draft of recommendations, which, surprisingly, he manages to do. So, being pressed for time, we reconvene at 3:25, only 25 minutes late, and begin consideration, item by item, of the recommendations. It appears that UN seminars are expected to achieve consensus on their recommendations, which affords me opportunities to toss a few monkey wrenches. I cannot agree with any resolution, I say, that speaks of the right to development. Rights, I say, have corresponding duties; for example, in the United States we have a right to speak freely, and the government has the duty to protect speakers; in the Soviet Union they have a right to work, and the government has the duty to provide jobs, at which point the Soviet Union interrupts to say that Soviet citizens have the right to free speech, too. I say that is nice, then ask (pretending not to know the answer), who has the duty that corresponds to a country's right to development? Ireland asks more or less the same question concerning the so-called right to peace. France asks what the fifth resolution means. I offer the following new resolution: "This Seminar appeals to the General Assembly to devise procedures by which it may be ascertained whether the peoples of all countries enjoy their fundamental human right of being governed only with their consent." The USSR objects to this. On behalf of the PLO, Algeria argues vigorously in favor of the resolution calling upon the UN to guarantee the Palestinian people their rights; I offer an amendment adding, "the people of Israel, the people of Afghanistan, and the people of Cambodia." This proves to be a formidable monkey wrench, and haggling continues until 6:15 when the chair announces that the various interpreters (some twenty in number: French into English, into Chinese, into Spanish, into Russian; Russian into . . .) insist on their right to go home.

August 13: We spend the day haggling, much to the annoyance of the Soviet Union, who wants to get on. I ask why the Soviet Union is so anxious; after all, Soviet delegates are renowned for their ability to outlast, or outsit, the delegates of other countries. "Iron-bottom Molotov" was a term of grudging respect in the United States, I add. He is not amused. By the end of the day, we have approved—i.e., gained consensus on—one innocuous resolution.

August 14 (last day): We WEOG's have our customary pre-session meeting to discuss strategy. As usual, the expression most frequently heard is, "We can live with that." That speaks volumes, because it reflects the fact that the West is engaged in a holding operation here, and that the initiative, and the power, here as in the UN generally, is in the hands of others. Australia is becoming annoyed with me and, truth to tell, I with her. The morning session is devoted entirely to consideration of the following Algerian resolution:

> The Seminar recognizes that racism as a state ideology violently negates the basic humanity of its victims. Apartheid, racism, and racial discrimination, colonialism, neo-colonialism, foreign domination and occupation [the Namibia situation], aggression, and threats against national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the denial to self-determination of a people are flagrant breaches of human rights, deny the political and social conditions for development, and constitute a threat to international peace. Collaboration with states that have racism as a complement to state ideology endangers peace and international security. The fight of oppressed peoples for self-determination is an inalienable right.

That's quite a mouthful, but I indicate my support, provided the following words are added: "The right of a people not to be governed without its consent is also an inalienable right." Algeria makes the reasonable point that my addition is not germane to the subject of her resolution. Cuba, in what he would have me believe is the spirit of conciliation, says I should introduce this as a separate resolution. I say I am quite willing to do this if the two resolutions can be voted on as a package. Cuba and Algeria refuse this, and I refuse to withdraw my amendment unless, as a separate resolution, it is voted on along with the Algerian resolution. Cuba becomes angry, saying that there is no reason why we cannot vote on, first, the Algerian, then the American resolution. Since it is now after one o'clock, the chairman adjourns us, whereupon the Soviet Union says to me, "I agree with you. Package deal, yes?" I thank him for his support and he makes a beeline for the Cuban

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participant. One minute later the Cuban comes to me, a broad smile on his handsome face. "O.K.," he says in halting English, "a package." I apologize for my inability to speak Spanish and we shake hands. When, after lunch, the package is formally proposed, France offers what I see as an insignificant amendment, saying that, at least in the French version, there is a troubling phrase that he cannot accept. Algeria refuses to accept the French changes and the package deal collapses.

We then turn to another resolution championed by Algeria:

> This Seminar appeals to the U.N. member states to implement U.N. resolutions and decisions concerning the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to freely determine their political status and exercise their human rights as a prerequisite to achieving peace and development.

I offer the following amendment: After the words, "Palestinian people," add, "the people of Israel, the people of Afghanistan, and the people of Cambodia." To put it mildly, no consensus is reached on this, and the wrangling becomes somewhat nasty. The Soviet Union cannot understand me, he says; Professor Berns is surely not like the American people he has encountered during his very pleasant visit to New York; they are cooperative, friendly. "And Professor Berns? He's not democratic. He's preventing us from doing our business. He talks about democracy. O.K. Why doesn't he go along with the majority?" Algeria pipes up, claiming I have not kept a promise I made to her, and proceeds to lecture me on morality. (At this point I half expect to see a blind man grope his way into the chamber and start lecturing me on the colors of the rainbow.) Australia joins in the attack, then Morocco. I haven't felt so uncomfortable in a parliamentary situation since the Cornell faculty meetings of 1969; still, I don't budge. Instead, I remind the participants of what it means to have a right, and that I intend to exercise my right to withhold my consent. They have a corresponding duty to allow me to exercise it. Kenya proposes a recess during which some of us might get together privately. The chairman agrees, and a half dozen of us repair to the adjoining small conference room. Here I am persuaded by Morocco that my amendment is not really germane to the Algerian. O.K., I say, I'll withdraw it and replace it with this one: Add, "and the right of Israel to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries." This, I point out, is germane; this is the language of UN resolution 242. . . . Of course, this is unacceptable. Senegal complains that no one else supports my amendment, but Ireland immediately says he supports it. Morocco then recalls a precedent; it seems that at least one previous UN seminar presented its recommendations in two categories, one for recommendations on which there was consensus, and the other for recommendations on which there was no consensus. We troop back to the main chamber where a new quarrel erupts: Cuba argues that my resolutions don't even belong in the second category because no one else supports them, or almost no one else supports them. He suggests a third category for my resolutions but, because there is no precedent for this, and because I threaten to object to all recommendations (even the innocuous ones), I eventually win. In this context, I insist that the chair determine how many participants support my resolution concerning Israel's right to live in peace within "secure and recognized boundaries." There is some confusion and hesitation, but eventually the following raise their hands: Ireland, France, Australia, Portugal, and Belgium. Conspicuously not raising their hands are Cyprus, Egypt, India, Mexico, Finland, and, of course, all the Soviet bloc and Third World countries—this in a Seminar that will adopt resolutions on the sovereign rights of nations, etc. . . .

Eventually, we adopt our two categories of recommendations: consensus (innocuous) and nonconsensus (contentious). But it is now 7:45, and the interpreters have agreed to remain only until 8:30, and we have not yet adopted our report. (Our recommendations constitute only chapter four of a four-chapter report.) The chairman suggests we begin immediately to consider the draft submitted by the rapporteur, and that we do so page by page. But the draft numbers some 150 pages, being a compilation of all the various points made during our two weeks. I suggest that we will never finish if we adopt this procedure, that he should merely ask whether there are any objections. (Since we were given the draft only today, I doubt that anyone has had time to read it all; I know that I got through only 30 pages of chapter one.) Australia objects to the uniform use of the masculine pronoun, etc., and suggests that it be redrafted, but when the rapporteur winces, Australia says she is content that her objections be noted somewhere. Most of us sigh in relief. Whereupon Algeria objects to paragraph 39 of chapter one, which reads as follows: "The view was therefore expressed that it would be preferable to speak of development as a necessity rather than a right. . . ." Yes, she says, that view was expressed, but only by one participant. Here (and elsewhere) it should be indicated that the view was expressed only by one country. (So saying, she glares at me.) Cuba, Senegal, the Soviet Union, et al., rally to her support. I say, I have no objection to these changes being made, but insist that this be done in every case. That is, we must ascertain the number of participants who agree with each view expressed. The chairman shouts that that would take us another two weeks and it is now almost 8:30. "Distinguished participants, we *must* adopt our report. . . . It would be unprecedented for a seminar not to adopt a report, unprecedented!" (Who, I wonder, will ever read it?) Some thirty minutes are consumed by this dispute; finally, the chairman says he will assume that there are no objections to the draft report as written, and before anyone can open his mouth, he bangs his gavel saying, "the report is adopted." It is, in fact, now a few minutes before 9 p.m., but, so far as I can learn by twisting my dial, the interpreters are still with us. This is fortunate because the chairman must make a closing speech. He thanks us, we thank him—and the rapporteur, and the secretary, and the vice-chairman, and the various members of the Secretariat who have been so helpful, and the documents' custodian.

With that we adjourn. As we gather up our papers, Ireland, who is a charming and eloquent man, asks me for my impressions. I say that if asked I shall recommend that the United States reduce its contribution to the UN. (We now pick up 25 percent of the tab, and more.) He says he was afraid I would say that, but for us to do that will mean the end of the United Nations. I

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reply that that might not be the tragedy he implies, but he thinks it will be the prelude to World War III. He then chastises the United States for its attitude: "In one sense, you don't take the UN seriously. For example, you are constantly changing your personnel, and as a result you don't establish the relationships that might permit you to work effectively here." We shake hands; in fact, there is a general round of handshaking, and I even receive a friendly slap on the back from Bulgaria. I run for a cab—I am of course late for a dinner engagement—and as I am being driven uptown I reflect that most of the participants will soon be meeting and working together again—in fact, unlike me, they do represent their countries, most of them on the UN's Third Committee (which deals with human rights)—and most of them will regularly vote against the United States. As Cuba said, they are the majority.

August 15: I go to my USUN office and begin discarding part of the mountain of paper that has accumulated on my desk (and to which, I confess, I contributed a few foothills). Then, as I promised, I go up to the eleventh floor to chat with one of our ambassadors. When I report what Ireland had said about our attitude toward the UN, he says Ireland may be right. And the ambassador may be right, but I wonder what difference it would make if our UN representatives served longer and succeeded in establishing closer relations with other delegations.

I suspect this Seminar was typical of UN meetings, especially of meetings on human rights, and it was surely not convened with the view that we might learn something from each other. It was not conducted with that purpose in mind. One can argue, as I did, that to know what human rights are requires that we understand what it means to be human, and what it is that distinguishes humans from other classes of beings, but all this falls on deaf ears. Jefferson and Tom Paine, following the political philosophers, could speak of the rights of man and were prepared to explain how these rights were related to and derived from man's nature; but UN seminarians are impatient with such talk. What they want is a UN declaration saying that the "South" has rights and the "North" (which means the United States) has duties, and it matters not a fig to them that, when challenged, they cannot present a rational argument on behalf of their demand. They have the votes.

Privately, some of them will concede that human rights have been best secured in the liberal democracies, but such concessions are quickly overwhelmed by their resentments toward their "former colonial masters." Privately, some of them will acknowledge that the Soviet Union is acting with gross hypocrisy, but the Soviet Union and its bloc supplies them with votes. A U.S. mission made of scores of Eleanor Roosevelts and Adlai Stevensons, all serving for life, would not, I sadly conclude, change this situation one whit. ❑

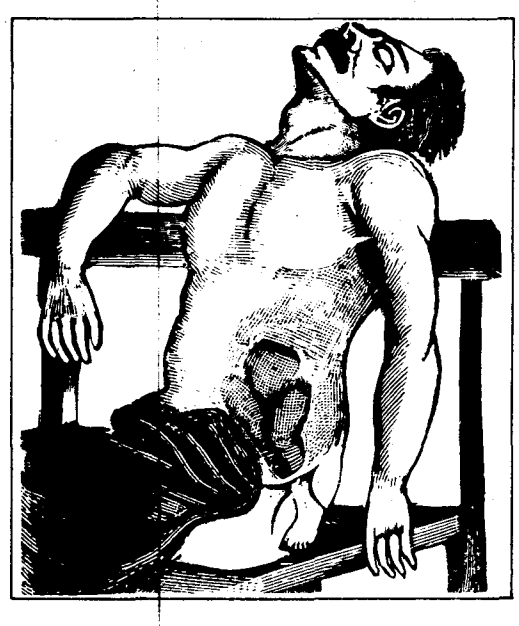
Michael Novak

BETTER DEAD THAN THE LIVING DEAD: THE TOTALITARIAN DIFFERENCE

Totalitarian regimes do not measure their successes by the number of corpses they heap up but by the degree to which they render all citizens living corpses.

Years ago, in college, I was taught that the distinction between the authoritarian and the totalitarian regime is the single most important political distinction of our time. Nothing I have seen since makes me doubt that I was well taught. Yet for decades American public life and high political leadership seemed to suffer from the failure to grasp this distinction with lucidity and to employ it critically. Mere anti-Communism seemed flaccid. Mere support for right-wing or left-wing regimes —without ideological awareness—seemed undiscerning and ineffective.

Thus, when Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig and UN Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick brought the long tradition of political science on this point into public usage, I quietly cheered. I naively expected serious journalists and academics to applaud this bridging of the gap between the academy and government as a step forward for reasoned intelligence. Instead, exactly the opposite proved to be the case. Attacks upon this distinction—absent these many years—have recently been unremitting. Political leaders are not usually required to compensate for the intellectual backwardness of their academic and journalistic critics. The interesting question is why they should be so required in this one basic and fundamental case.



The first recorded claim that a state is and ought to be totalitarian was not made by scholars but by its first enthusiastic practitioner—by Benito Mussolini in a speech of October 28, 1925: "*Tutto nello Stato, niente al di fuori dello Stato, nullo contro lo Stato*" ("All things in the State, nothing outside the State, nothing against the State"). No autocrat or dictator of the past ever made such total claims for the state. Mussolini and his cohorts knew quite well that they were establishing something new. They knew they were going beyond the statism of Napoleon, beyond the autocrats of fabled Byzantium, beyond tribal chieftains and Western emperors. The word they consciously chose for this novelty was *totalitario*. By this word they

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said what they meant and meant what they said: a unity of theory, action, organization, and consent unprecedented in history. They pointed to a statewide unity centered in the depths of the mind—total consent. Yet the Italian Fascists left no doubt that the citadel they occupied was not intellect but will: *feroce volontà totalitaria* (violent totalitarian will). From the beginning, they intended to go beyond any natural law, any positive law, and any rule of reason to establish their fortress in the arbitrary will of the leader. At first, this leader was imagined to be a single person, like Il Duce himself or, later, his imitator (in this and other respects) Adolf Hitler. But the essence of the idea is unitary, arbitrary will. The essence, as Stalin divined, is as well exemplified in rule by one party, committee, troika, or Party Congress, as by a single ruler. No other source of moral or intellectual authority is recognized but the will of the ruling body.

This discussion of Mussolini is important for understanding the fundamental notes of totalitarianism. In a novel way, totalitarianism claims far more than complete dominance within the political sphere. It claims total power over *every* sphere of human thought and action. It claims, as well, total power over the moral universe of conscience and over intellect itself. It is the claim of that will to embody in itself all the authority of nature, natural law, history, and moral right that constitutes the essence of totalitarianism. No totalitarian could say, "My country, right or wrong," for he recognizes no right, no wrong, except in the will of the rulers of the state.

In her brilliant book, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), Hannah Arendt began her justly famous thirteenth chapter on "Ideology and Terror: A Novel Form of Government" with these words:

> In the preceding chapters we emphasized repeatedly that the means of total domination are not only more drastic but that totalitarianism differs essentially from other forms of political oppression known to us such as despotism, tyranny and dictatorship. Wherever it rose to power, it developed entirely new political institutions and destroyed all social, legal and political traditions of the country. No matter what the specifically national tradition or the particular spiritual source of its ideology, totalitarian government always transformed classes into masses, supplanted the party system, not by one-party dictatorships, but by a mass movement, shifted the center of power from the army to the police, and established a foreign policy openly directed toward world domination. Present totalitarian governments are developed from one-party systems; whenever these became truly totalitarian, they started to operate according to a system of values so radically different from all others, that none of our traditional legal, moral, or common sense utilitarian categories could any longer help us to come to terms with, or judge, or predict their course of action.

Professor Arendt went on to explain how Lenin and Stalin had added something new—something worse—to the boastful claims of Mussolini. Particularly when wedded to Marxist ideology, totalitarianism claimed a new dialectic. While in practice it remained rooted in the arbitrary will of rulers, totalitarianism of the Marxist sort claimed in theory to represent "strictly and unequivocally those laws of Nature and History from which all positive laws always have been supposed to spring."

This claim is staggering. To obey the will of rulers is thought to be obedience not solely to human will but to Nature or History itself. This hideous claim makes individual human beings, even ironically totalitarianism's rulers, superfluous. It goes to the source of all authority. Totalitarian lawfulness "pretends to have found a way to establish the rule of justice on earth." This monstrous power, moreover, at a stroke does away with any and all violations of human rights. For there are, strictly and consistently, no human rights whatever *outside of* totalitarian justice. "Everything in the State, nothing outside the State, nothing against the State."

Westerners who grow up in a pragmatic, secular, limited state can scarcely comprehend the radical nature of such claims. Our first instinct is to refuse to hear them or to believe that they are equivocally intended. No one can possibly think this way, we wish to say. It is too barbaric.

The notion of totalitarianism, of course, is not simple. The forms totalitarianism assumed in its three classic cases—in Mussolini's Italy, Hitler's Germany, and in the USSR under Lenin, Stalin, and today—are not identical. The degree of physical barbarity, torture, and visible police terror varies from regime to regime and from time to time. The public effort to stifle private liberties varies widely. In some cases, citizens may be free to change residence, to travel, or to relocate within the country, to change occupations, and to conduct their private affairs with little or no official interference. What matters is that at any time, not only in principle but *by ideology,* the only law which applies is the will of the State. It is not the total physical barbarity or total range of State control which are decisive, but the total ideological claim, against which there is no appeal. All states and most rulers in history have done things which are immoral. Totalitarian states regard all their activities as moral by definition. This is the underlying monstrosity.

Writing recently in *Harper's* of the impact of totalitarianism upon contemporary Poland, Leszek Kolakowski focuses upon this essential point. He recalls the illusions of those who think Communism is reformable:

> Yet if we take communism's conception of itself at face value, a "democratic communism" is a self-contradictory notion. This is not a matter of ideological preference. Communism has defined itself not only in historical practice but in theoretical terms as well. Many of the pronouncements of its founders—Lenin and Trotsky above all—leave us in no doubt as to communism's essential nature. It is intended to triumph through violence and coercion, obeying no other law than political expediency, and its ultimate achievement must be unlimited concentration of economic, political, police, and cultural power in the hands of a single party. The fact is that any changes, real or possible, that tend to make the communist power machine less totalitarian and less oppressive do not reinforce this system but weaken it; they are agents for corrosion, not purification.
>
> Once we take seriously communism's own definition of itself—in both ideological and historical terms—we cannot escape the conclusion that this is not a system that can be reformed; it can only be destroyed. The question that then arises is whether the system must be felled at one stroke, or whether gradual erosion can accomplish the same end.

Setting aside the role of Soviet totalitarianism in eventually deciding the fate of Poland, Kolakowski then cites those elements of life in Poland which prevented Poles (and perhaps Poles alone in Eastern Europe) from ever quite yielding total consent to totalitarian premises. First, he points to the idea of national unity, of Poland simply as Poland, with a history and culture much practiced in the arts of survival under hostile ideological occupa-

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tion. Next he points to the hold of the Polish church upon the minds and hearts of millions of Poles, and its claim to a moral and historical vision independent of totalitarian ideology. Even when the institutions of the church have been restrained, narrowed, and repressed, this moral vision has proved its vigor. Even those Poles who are atheist and agnostic find in this vision and in the courage to sustain it a spiritual bulwark against totalitarian consent. Finally, Kolakowski cites the role of privately held farms and a virtually independent agricultural sector. The totalitarians could not be quite total in Poland. Of course, the force of the established totalitarian system, so total in physical power, makes the prospect of "erosion" within Poland itself problematic, even if the Soviets do not intervene to defend the integrity of the totalitarian idea. But the withholding of total consent by 33 million Poles weakens the grip of the totalitarians within Poland by just that much.

The case of Poland brings to light two other features of totalitarianism. Totalitarianism is threatened by even the smallest wedges driven into its total claims, so that the existence of a moral vision which presumes to judge totalitarianism, rather than to be judged by it, and the existence of institutions, however restricted in their scope and practices, which in principle withhold from it total consent, may threaten to "erode" it from within. Until now, there have been no cases of totalitarian systems ever being overthrown from within. Thus, some who hold to the distinction between authoritarian regimes and totalitarian regimes have believed that a crucial difference between the two is that some among the former, but none among the latter, have evolved historically in a democratic and liberal direction. This is still the case. Yet on this point the theory may have to be revised if, by some sustained and almost superhuman effort, the Poles (and then, perhaps, other Eastern Europeans) manage to destroy totalitarianism from within—and the Soviets, for some reason, permit the totalitarian principle to be denied in Poland. These are very large ifs, but their potential cannot *a priori* be denied.

For those of us who believe in the principles of liberty and who believe, further, that these principles are "natural" to humans—indeed, that "the natural system of liberty" is humankind's proper inheritance—must necessarily believe that at some future time, in some unforeseen way, the totalitarian idea will collapse of its own dead weight. The world, we believe, cannot forever endure half slave and half free.

Nonetheless, wishful thinking cannot carry us away. For most of human history man has endured despotism, autocracy, and thorough authoritarian rule with remarkable passivity, a kind of sleep noted even by the author of our own Declaration of Independence. Yet here, too, the distinction between authoritarian regimes and totalitarian regimes has special force. It is one of the properties of authoritarian regimes that they owe their legitimacy, such as it is, to religious or other values greater than themselves. Kings have often made claims "by divine right," and all authoritarian regimes—like democratic regimes—derive legitimacy by reference to values outside the will of the rulers and the state. It is this gap between the claims of the state and the moral principles from which it derives its legitimacy that makes the progress of liberty and individual rights possible.

It must be stressed that authoritarian regimes have at times acted with all the ferocity and barbarity of totalitarian regimes. From the viewpoint of a victim who has been tortured or mutilated or destroyed in the center of his personality, it makes little difference whether the torturer is authoritarian or totalitarian. The single human body, and the single human psyche, has all too often been submitted to the horrors of the stake, the rack, the jaw-breaking *pomme,* the skull-crushing machine, the electric shock, the water-torture, the guillotine, and other barbarities, under every sort of ideology. It is not in their physical or psychological brutality that authoritarian regimes differ from totalitarian ones.

Again, a particularly thorough and savage authoritarian regime may wage relentless war on every individual within society who threatens its grip on political power. Authoritarian regimes have put to death bishops, priests, rabbis, and entire classes of people, and they have done so on religious, racial, and political grounds of virtually every sort. Neither bigotry nor racism makes totalitarian regimes distinctive. Nor does the ruthless suppression of poets, intellectuals, or dissidents who threaten political stability. In such matters, authoritarian regimes may rival totalitarian ones. It is not enough, however, to argue that the new powers conferred upon state authorities through modern technologies —whether of the mass media, computers, transport, communications, exquisite instruments of torture, or the capacities for mass murder—now make authoritarian regimes totalitarian.

The heart of the matter remains ideology. The totalitarian regime claims, as the authoritarian regime does not, to embody right and wrong in its own will. It allows for no gap between the claims of the state and the claims of morality. What it says, what it does, *that* is moral. Neither in principle nor in practice does it allow for any other justification. That is what makes totalitarianism novel. That is what makes totalitarianism monstrous: That is why Professor Kolakowski writes of it as a system not to be reformed but destroyed.

If totalitarianism is ever to be destroyed, though, it is necessary both to grasp the totalitarian idea fully and to resist it in its every manifestation. The diagnosis of totalitarianism has been a staple of acute political science for more than forty years,* although the reality itself—at first so hard to grasp—is older by a generation. This idea, then, was not invented by the new American administration.

II

Despite the weight of common experience over nearly half this planet, and despite the weight of sober scholarship, resistance to the distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian has suddenly grown—predictably, on the political Left.

*Among major authors who have written well and exactly about totalitarianism, in all its comparative manifestations and internal complexities, are: Raymond Aron (1964); Zbigniew Brzezinski (1956); Norman Cohn (1957); Carl J. Friedrich (1954); S. Neumann (1942); G.H. Sabine (1937); Leonard Schapiro (1969); J.L. Talmon (1942); Robert C. Tucker (1963); and Karl D. Bracher (1970).

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One of the great myths of our era has been the attempt to describe world politics in terms of right, left, and center, in such a way as to suggest that opposed to the totalitarian Left there is also a totalitarian Right. This myth was briefly shattered during the period of the Ribbentrop-Molotov accord, but it revived in full vigor once Nazi Germany and the Stalinist USSR engaged in a bloody war of survival. In fact, totalitarianism is neither of the Right nor of the Left. Because it claims to embody all morality in its own ferocious will, it is in a category all by itself. It is systemically opposed not only to democracy and liberty but to any moral legitimation, even in a previously authoritarian society, outside itself. Those who cherish democracy, individual human rights, liberty, and the power of the moral universe transcending any and all states are in opposition both to authoritarian states and to totalitarian states. Yet we are so opposed for distinctly different reasons and with distinctly different hopes. Authoritarian regimes must be assisted and encouraged, often in the light of moral claims beyond themselves which they themselves recognize, to respect the individual human rights and liberties implicit in those moral claims. Totalitarian regimes, however, cannot be reformed. In the words of Kolakowski again: "The question that . . . arises is whether the system must be felled at one stroke, or whether gradual erosion can accomplish the same end."

The collapse of Mussolini and Hitler has left the world with only one vigorous totalitarian system: that legitimated by Marx and Lenin. This fact has placed those on the political Left in the West in a difficult rhetorical position. Desiring to save the "essence" of Marx and Lenin from having been "distorted by many very regrettable but historically explainable mistakes" (Kolakowski knows the syndrome well), some on the Left are reluctant to accept the full force of the totalitarian idea in Marxist-Leninist thought. They try to water down the seriousness of the idea and to find "reforms" and "mitigations" in its embodiment. Others, choosing the other track, huff and puff to blow up authoritarian regimes by degrees until, they claim, the distinction between the two is merely "academic."

From the perspective of victims, as we have seen, it matters little whether one's torturers are authoritarians or totalitarians. So much is true. Yet, from the perspective of the future systemic course of individual human rights, the distinction matters a great deal. Under totalitarian regimes, there exist no individual human rights, nor is there any moral and intellectual ground on which to claim them. Words, declarations, and principles mean—both in principle and in practice—what rulers decide they mean. Doublespeak is not, as some think, primarily an instrument of propaganda but a logical corollary of the totalitarian idea: Meanings follow from naked will, in an Alice-in-Wonderland cosmology. Furthermore, once a totalitarian regime has achieved total control over a terrorized population, it may count upon a docile citizenry. Thus, the more successful it is, the more its physical barbarities may diminish. Individuals are allowed only those dimensions of spontaneity the state chooses to permit them. Totalitarian regimes do not measure their success by the number of corpses they heap up but by the degree to which they render all citizens living corpses.

On the surface, therefore, totalitarian regimes at some times and in some places may appear to be at once more placid and less physically barbaric than some authoritarian regimes. The regime of Idi Amin, for example, may have exceeded in its blood and gore any contemporaneous totalitarian regime except that of Pol Pot in Cambodia. One considers Cambodia totalitarian and Uganda authoritarian, not by counting the corpses but by examining the idea by which their rulers justified themselves. It is not without significance that the madness of Idi Amin bears resemblance to the radical revolutionary will of Pol Pot and his comrades—except that the latter were following doctrine, plan, and principle.

The assaults upon the distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian begin with claims that it is too "abstract," "academic," even "theological." The real world, these critics say, is more "complex." Yet this is true of all important words in political theory. It is true of "democratic," "liberal," "socialist," and even "revolutionary." The universe of political regimes is, after all, fairly small, unlike the virtually numberless cases over which physicists may generalize. In an important way, every political regime is unique. All typologies and generalizations, indispensable as they may be, must constantly be checked against concrete cases and singular circumstances. Nonetheless, if it is proper to speak generally of free and democratic nations and of respect for human rights, it is also proper to speak generally of authoritarian regimes and totalitarian regimes.

The critics, however, do not so much deny the force of the distinction on its merits as dispute the ways in which it may be applied in practice. In particular, they express fears that any policy recognizing such a distinction will, in the words of Anthony Lewis, bear down hard on Communist regimes and "wink" at human rights abuses by authoritarian regimes "of the right." Most of the critics seem especially concerned about specific regimes in Latin America (Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala, and others), although they occasionally mention South Korea and the Philippines as well. The general lines of argument appear to be that those authoritarian states which, in one way or another, are allies of the United States should be placed under pressure to reform themselves. But would not such a policy be one-sided if similar pressures were not applied to other authoritarian or

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totalitarian states *not* allied with the United States? The critics typically reply that in such cases we have little "leverage" anyway. In effect, these critics would have us punish our friends and forge closer alliances with our foes.

Clearly, a detached scholar might argue for such a position, however odd it seems, without resisting the distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian states. If the fulcrum of the argument is leverage, the recommended tactic has little immediate bearing on the type of regime in question and much bearing on its dependence upon the United States. Indeed, the critics typically argue that the United States is "propping up" some regimes which abuse human rights, and should use this "dependency" to insist upon reforms.

Characteristic of these critics is Stanley Hoffmann, who continues to justify the Carter policy in Latin America, even though he now finds the way in which Carter executed it incompetent. In two long articles on foreign policy in the *New York Review of Books* last spring, Hoffmann uses many subordinate clauses and sentences to import the new growth of Soviet military power and the fresh dangers of Soviet military ambition—points no longer contestable—into his earlier positions and still comes out about where Carter was in his Notre Dame speech of 1977. We should, says Hoffmann, "give no encouragement to regimes that trample the human rights for whose defense we stand (such as the current regimes in Argentina and Chile). And we should—as Carter did in Nicaragua and Zimbabwe—accept ungrudgingly radical new regimes." Hoffmann argues that the former should be treated as delinquents, the latter not. For when we treat the latter as delinquents, "we foster both unnecessary hostility and the kinds of internal reaction that strengthens extremism, paranoia, and repression." The reader may wonder why treating Argentina and Chile as delinquents will not have similar deplorable effects. But this seems to be what Hoffmann means by "complexity"; it is his favorite word. In his case, "complexity" licenses such inconsistencies, but in a pattern that is quite familiar. Almost systematically, Hoffmann minimizes the abuses and dangers of totalitarian societies and their friends (the USSR, Cuba, Angola, etc.), and maximizes those of authoritarian societies. He has one standard for the former—détente, friendship, cosseting, wooing—and another for the latter: no encouragement for delinquency.

The principle on which Hoffmann seems to stand is as follows: "The key issue—for the rest of the century—is the issue of revolution . . . and it is against the excesses and local incrustations [sic] of capitalism that many revolutions are likely to occur."† Hoffmann would oppose U.S. policy, "should U.S. intervention on behalf of the status quo turn us into heavy-handed protectors of shaky regimes, and should we behave as self-appointed geo-political policemen." He wavers between holding that the United States can no longer unilaterally work its will in a world of complexity—he observes that where the USSR or Libya ship arms to "terrorists" there must be local actors willing to receive them—and holding that the United States can and does work its will unilaterally "to prevent the coming to power of radical regimes." He asks: "Don't some repressive regimes, in our spheres of influence, survive not because they correspond to local political cultures but because of the support we lend them?" In Hoffmann's world, most revolutionaries are really agrarian reformers deeply rooted in local cultures and prevented from enjoying the liberal institutions they desire solely by quasi-foreign elites propped up, alas, by the unilateral power of the United States. The question he never confronts is whether most of the nations of the world which have experienced "revolution" in this century continue to be non-democratic, authoritarian regimes at best and totalitarian regimes at worst. He recognizes that, in terms of human rights, Castro is worse than Batista. He doubts that Somoza was worse than Kadar. Yet he continues to attribute idealism to the "radical regimes" and "revolutions" of our era, a simple-minded act of soul-shattering splendor.

Hidden in Hoffmann's scheme is contempt for capitalist society, since only on the basis of such contempt does his use of the word "radical" have any meaning at all. This contempt is carried to an extreme by Tom J. Farer in an article on Latin America which Hoffmann cites in order to spare himself detailed analysis of that region. Farer judges that the distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian, which "could be useful," is, alas, "being subverted by dogmatists who assign practically all rulers professing capitalism and trying to liquidate leftists to the category of 'merely authoritarian' while coincidentally expelling every revolutionary government and movement into the outer darkness of totalitarianism." This polemical use of the "useful distinction" has been designed, Farer thinks, for "attacking Carter's human rights policy and for countering criticisms of regimes that brutally crush proponents of reform, liberals, socialists, and Marxists alike." Farer thinks that Jeane Kirkpatrick's vision, for example, is "Manichean," and depends on "heroic indifference to detail."

†Here one must object to the careless and undifferentiated use of the word "capitalism." The system of landed estates in most of Latin America owes far more to the late medieval system of land tenure in the Latin nations of the Holy Roman Empire than to the new model of North American capitalism. Furthermore, the extensive state management of the economies of Brazil, Argentina, and Chile, among other partially industrialized states in Latin America, generates an economic order quite different from that of democratic capitalism in North America. Not all non-socialist forms of statism are properly called "capitalist," any more than the mercantilism or "patrimonial capitalism" of seventeenth-century Northern Europe.

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Farer attacks the idea that authoritarian regimes may evolve in democratic directions by countering that the Somoza regime lasted 45 years and that military rule has persisted (under, he does not say, how many constitutions) in El Salvador since 1932. He also argues that "authoritarian governments of every ideological hue extend their jurisdiction as far as necessary to achieve their ends." Today, this tendency is exaggerated by urbanization, mass communications, and the spread of "revolutionary ideas," so that authoritarian rulers *of a new type* "impose comprehensive surveillance and more tightly controlled social institutions by increasing the power and reach of public authority." His point is that the "new type" of authoritarians conduct themselves like totalitarians.

These arguments evade the central point. Authoritarian governments which abuse human rights do not need to be called totalitarian in order for us to hold them in moral and political abhorrence. Actually, the cheapening of the word "totalitarian" by giving it merely a metaphorical use does not increase but diminishes one's moral outrage. What some authoritarian governments do—and what, in the nature of the case, all are tempted to do (which is what makes democracy and the Bill of Rights necessary)—is beyond excuse. Not only that, their frequently evidenced narrowness of mind evokes its own retribution. When authoritarian rulers tolerate, or in any case cannot control, the wanton murder and torture of citizens who are democratic—or, indeed, any citizens—they lose any legitimation they may claim in the name of common morality, natural law, religion, or other authority beyond the state. Since they are not totalitarian, they depend upon such legitimation, and its absence weakens them severely, alienates their natural supporters, and gives strength to their enemies.

For authoritarian regimes may be, and often are, delegitimated because of violations of moral principles; totalitarian regimes cannot be. This moral difference, indeed, is recognized even by the critics of the distinction between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, though they do not put it in so many words. They simply take for granted that U.S. pressure can lead authoritarian regimes, particularly in Latin America, to live up to their professed Western ideals. On the other hand, they tacitly recognize that moral remonstrance has no effect whatever upon totalitarian states, unless backed up by applications of power which evoke reasons of expedience. For no totalitarian state can, in principle, even admit to the violation of any individual human rights. Such a state does what it wills; no other rights count. Even the rulers of totalitarian states are painfully aware, as Hannah Arendt shrewdly pointed out, that even they are superfluous in the very logic of the system they serve. (Once, in Geneva, my colleague asked a representative of a totalitarian state about a certain personality. The totalitarian smiled, "Oh, he was rehabilitated." My colleague asked where he was. The totalitarian wanly said: "But he was executed.")

III

In spite of what critics of the authoritarian-totalitarian distinction may argue, it cannot be stressed enough that, unlike authoritarianism, totalitarianism is preeminently an *idea*. The very fact that it is, at first, "academic," "abstract," "metaphysical," even "theological" is precisely what makes it monstrous. There *are* revolutions which intend to cut human beings down until they fit that horrifying and incredible idea, and they are vigorous and on the march. The utility of the totalitarian idea to revolutionaries is the simplicity of its morality, the resentments it channels, the range of methods it licenses, and the naked power it enhances.

What is this distinction's utility? Only a firm grasp of the totalitarian idea arms us against the greatest menace of our era. Second, we are forewarned that the suppression of information within totalitarian regimes allows them to escape public attention and public outrage commensurate with their systemic abuses. (Only once in 37 annual seasons of the UN Human Rights Commission has an Eastern European nation been cited for human rights violations.) Third, in those contexts in which one must choose between the lesser of two evils, this distinction helps us to abhor both evils with exactitude of judgment and with prudential discretion. The evils of authoritarianism are no less evil because those of totalitarianism are worse. Both stand condemned—authoritarianism by its own sources of legitimation, which it betrays, and totalitarianism by its arrogation of all morality to its own naked internal will.

Finally, the distinction offers hope. Since totalitarianism is fundamentally an idea, it can be defeated in and by the human spirit. Earlier, I cited Kolakowski's question whether totalitarianism must be destroyed in a single stroke or destroyed gradually through erosion. Actually, there is a third possibility. It is one about which Solzhenitsyn has written often. Since totalitarianism is a disease of the human spirit—an intoxication of the will, a blinding of the intellect—it can be defeated through weapons of the spirit. Even totalitarians can cease believing in the totalitarian idea. Even they can come to be appalled by what they have wrought. And hundreds of millions of their subjects can cease believing in it, too. There are signs that spiritual decay is already far advanced among the present generation of totalitarians. Ideas of liberty and universal morality may work within the timbers of totalitarian structures like termites. Such termites combine the powers of erosion with possibilities of destruction in a single stroke.

It is naive, of course, to expect the last existing form of totalitarian thought, Marxism-Leninism, to collapse of its own weight. Even when its own elites cease believing in it—even if, as Solzhenitsyn writes, no one in the USSR can speak of Marxism-Leninism without a sardonic smile—the military power and administrative inertia of the empire which embodies those ideas may stand far longer than their animating principle. In the end, though, ideas are decisive. The moral order reasserts itself.

It is, perhaps, too much to hope that human flesh will ever be wholly free of authoritarian regimes and their abhorrent violations. It is not too much to hope at all that the last remaining form of totalitarianism will decay, die, and perish from the earth. A foreign policy aimed at unmasking the totalitarian idea and joining in the universal revulsion against it, while steadfastly and coldly calling the evils of authoritarianism by their self-condemning names, is well designed to attack both the lesser and the greater evils which today threaten and disgust us. □

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Martha Bayles

NADINE GORDIMER'S SOUTH AFRICA

When politics and art must mix.

We are used to hearing two different pronouncements on the subject of politics in literature: first that writers should be committed to protesting social injustice, and second that they should avoid making political comments for fear of becoming doctrinaire. To the extent that we agree with both pronouncements, we must acknowledge a contradiction. How can we say on the one hand that literature ought to make political statements, yet warn on the other that it cannot do so without sacrificing artistic integrity? Critics and reviewers often deal with this contradiction as though it were a matter of proportion, distinguishing between works that are "political" and those that are "too political." The assumption behind such distinctions seems to be that a writer is obliged to cover his political commentary with a certain amount of art, so it doesn't show up too nakedly. The critic then judges the work on whether the covering is adequate. In the case of a writer like Nadine Gordimer of South Africa, critical praise often takes the form of claiming that she has added plenty of artistry to what might otherwise have been a stark political statement:

> It is the combination of political authenticity with sensuous awareness that makes this novel [*Burger's Daughter*] so powerful. Yet the political moments are always illuminated by the intense observation of people and places—tiny details precisely and lovingly described—that brings every incident to life and that gives Miss Gordimer's writing such universality. (Anthony Sampson, *New York Times Book Review*)

It is true that Gordimer is a fascinating example of a writer in a highly politicized environment who has consistently dealt with that environment on her own artistic terms. And it is true that her artistry is impressive: Her prose has the extraordinary power to invade our minds with the intensity of lived experience, then linger not as words but as perceptual memory. Yet while her fiction deserves praise, it also deserves explanation. For a writer who has successfully combined politics and literature has accomplished a task that is far more complex and demanding than the mere dressing up of a message.

There can be no doubt that Gordimer has heeded the first pronouncement. Despite her early reputation as an exotic author providing European and American readers with vicarious travel to faraway places like the Transvaal, the River Zaire, and the Kalihari Desert, she has always been political in the sense of dealing unflinchingly with the injustice of apartheid. "Ah, Woe is Me," a story in her first collection, published in 1952, describes the travail of an African woman trying to raise her three children. Humble and hardworking, the woman believes "that there *was* a place for them; not a share in the White Man's place; but not no place at all, either; a place of their own. She wanted them to have it and she wanted them to stay there." As the story unfolds, we see that even this modest aim is too high. The woman and her husband are hindered at every turn: by poverty, and by a political system that dictates every aspect of their lives—from work and education to family and identity itself—according to its ideology of white supremacy and racial separation.

Ideology, defined as a coherent body of ideas attached to definite social and political institutions, may encroach more or less on the lives of those who live under its sway. An ideology that is contradictory, limited in scope, and embodied in only a few institutions is easier to ignore than something like apartheid—which for blacks and others who are not white approached the totalitarian. Throughout the fifties and sixties, as more and more laws and exclusionary policies were put into effect, Gordimer was writing fiction that reflects the massive encroachment of apartheid by showing how apartheid constantly interferes with the simplest efforts of nonwhite South Africans to make a living, express an opinion, or retain a shred of dignity. In "Six Feet of the Country" a black migrant dies of pneumonia, and because he lacks identity papers, the local officials don't bother to keep track of his body, sending the grieving relatives another corpse to bury. In "A Chip of Glass Ruby" an Indian husband disapproves of his wife's protest activities on behalf of the blacks, until it becomes clear that the increasing repression applies to Indians as well—even those, like him, who try not to get involved. In "Some Monday For Sure" a black youth tries to impress his brother-in-law by taking part in an act of sabotage, with the consequence of breaking up the family and driving his sister into madness and exile. The point is that Gordimer need not give such characters any particular virtues in order to command our sympathy. We feel for them because the system encroaches on them no matter what they do. In fact, the more imperfect they are, the more impressed we are by the discrepancy between even their greatest faults and the treatment they receive at the hands of the authorities. In "Happy Event" a servant woman who has killed her own baby rather than lose her job becomes the subject of a courtroom discussion on "the physical stamina of the African." The white magistrate asks the white doctor whether the woman would

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have been capable of bearing the child, murdering and disposing of it, then doing her employer's laundry the following day. The doctor replies: "Were the woman in question a European, I should, of course, say this would be most unlikely. Most unlikely. But of a native woman, I should say yes—yes, it would be possible." It is this argument more than the evidence that clinches the case, and we are left feeling that the woman has been judged racially rather than morally or legally.

As long as Gordimer stays with the victims of apartheid, her task is a straightforward one: to set the humanity of her characters against the arbitrary precepts of a dehumanizing ideology. The task remains straightforward because fiction in general counters the abstract with the particular, insisting that experience has meanings not reducible to intellectual constructs of any kind, including political ideologies. Fiction has a natural tendency to set the descriptive powers of language against the analytic, with the all-but-inevitable result of seeming to detract from the analysis. Accumulations of details, especially if they are rich and vivid, suggest to our minds that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in any philosophy.

In creating the sort of character who benefits from apartheid, Gordimer occasionally relies on the same dynamic of abstract versus particular, only this time within the character itself. She satirizes certain white attitudes by incarnating them in less-than-perfect flesh. "The African Magician," for instance, contains a sketch of a white police officer's wife who believes that Africans are "just like monkeys." She herself is "a gay one, strongly made-up, with a small waist and wide jelly-hips." Or Gordimer combines the smug materialism of the Afrikaner couple in "The Night the Favourite Came Home" with vulgar manners, and in the case of the wife, legs that are "muscular and heavy-boned and shapely as a wrestler's." Recurring throughout the stories are Afrikaner policemen with ugly haircuts and thuggish faces. Nor is the treatment confined to conservative whites. The naive liberal who patronizes blacks in "Which New Era Would That Be?" is described as "a determined woman" with a too-correct voice, a too-bright smile, a too-revealing blouse. As any good satirist knows, it doesn't take much; any shift from a character's cherished beliefs to the slightest detail of his imperfections has the effect, willy-nilly, of appearing to discredit the beliefs. It is a form of rebuttal more devastating in its way than argument—especially when employed by a writer whose eye for detail is as sharp as Gordimer's.

Yet caricature can only go so far. After the momentary shock and humor of seeing the contrast between thinker and thought, we lose interest in both. It is also an effect so easy to achieve that it sometimes occurs inadvertently, any time a character's ideas are juxtaposed with his physical flaws. An example of this inadvertent satire would be the aging ex-Communist in *Burger's Daughter,* Dick Terblanche. In a scene where Rosa, the daughter of his old comrade Lionel Burger, is about to leave his house, Terblanche makes a quiet but impassioned speech about the coming revolution. "Not long now, Rosa," he says. "Angola will go, and Moçambique . . . It's coming at last. Some of us will still be around when it happens." Then he jumps back to direct Rosa's car out of the driveway, and Gordimer gives us a glimpse in the rearview mirror of "his old man's legs, slightly bent with the effort at the back of the knees, the safari jacket lifted over the behind." There is no reason, given the rest of what we see of Dick Terblanche, to think that Gordimer intends to satirize his faith in the revolution, but that is the effect. The satirical contrast may be not only a device, but also a pitfall.

Satire has the further limitation of depending, for the most part, on the presence of a witness, a sympathetic major character who is not himself satirized. In Gordimer's short stories this tends to be a young person who emerges from a sheltered upbringing and encounters the harsh facts of his society. Casting a satirical eye at other whites is part of this process, but only part. The greater development is the gradual accumulation of experience leading up to a moment of rupture, when the assumptions and prejudices of the character fall like scales from his eyes. Early stories like "The Catch" and "The Train From Rhodesia" end on such moments of sudden revelation. A slightly later story, "The Smell of Death and Flowers," contains two such moments, the first occurring when a white girl dances with a black man for the first time, and is astonished that she feels neither revulsion nor excitement, but "*nothing.*" This leads her to join a mild protest, and when she is arrested she has the rest of the epiphany:

> . . . she looked up and saw the faces of the African onlookers . . . And she felt, suddenly, not *nothing,* but what they were feeling at the sight of her, a white girl, taken—incomprehensibly, as they themselves were used to being taken—under the force of white men's wills, which dispensed and withdrew life, imprisoned and set free, fed or starved, like God himself.

The short story form is well suited to this kind of development: It enables Gordimer to amass the details, produce the moment, and then stop. She need not concern herself with what the enlightened white character does afterward. Like satire, epiphany is brief.

Gordimer's first four novels contain protagonists who are like the sympathetic whites in the short stories, in that they perceive what is wrong with the social order. But unlike the whites in the stories, they go on perceiving it. The dangers inherent in this difference are exemplified in the character of Elizabeth Van Den Sandt, who spends most of the fourth novel, *The Late Bourgeois World,* perceiving the faults of her husband, his family, his political associates, the headmaster of her son's school, her son, her aged grandmother, her current lover, and the American astronauts orbiting in space. Individually, such moments might come off as satire or epiphany, but collectively, they come off as carping—for the simple reason that Elizabeth has a choice. Because she is white, her life is not nearly as encroached upon as that of a black. Apartheid does not automatically deny her humanity, so her humanity does not automatically defy

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apartheid. To the extent that she is free, she can either heed or not heed the moments of revelation, depending on her courage, honesty, or other virtues. We sympathize with her according to her choices, not her fate. The problem with her and the other white protagonists of the early novels is that they choose to go on living comfortably in the society they claim to abhor. By trying to sustain them as witnesses to injustice, Gordimer puts herself in the awkward position, for a novelist, of preferring the abstract to the particular—of locating virtue above and beyond the array of details she so keenly observes. It is not her intention to undercut these characters' disapproval of apartheid, or to make it look hypocritical. Yet such is the effect of prolonged ironic contrast between their attitudes and their lives.

Sometimes a novelist will try to improve a carping character by turning him into a politically correct character—the kind with all the answers. Yet this makes the same problem worse, because the more developed the character's ideas, the greater the pitfalls of inadvertent satire or irony, as his physical faults or manner of living will appear to detract from them. Because this occurs regardless of the novelist's intentions, he may feel tempted to ensure against it by selecting only those details that support or enhance the character's ideas—in short, to idealize. Gordimer comes close to doing this with the figure of Paul Clark, the young activist in her first novel, *The Lying Days,* who possesses not only brains and political idealism but "a quick blood-attraction of sex on him like the gloss on the plumes of a bird." And as recently as her much-acclaimed *Burger's Daughter,* Gordimer gives us mild idealization in the potent, leonine figure of the martyred Communist Lionel Burger. This inclination to supplement revolutionary politics with an extra dose of good looks or sex appeal may be one reason why a number of critics have tended to praise *Burger's Daughter* in terms that make it sound like a dressed-up political tract (the noble example of Rosa Burger picking up her father's fallen standard), and regard the complexities and convolutions of both the language and Rosa's psyche as so much ornament added to make the basic message more artistically palatable.

If true, such praise would be damning, because it would mean that Gordimer had crossed the line between commitment and doctrinairism—a movement in which the physical idealization of a politically correct character is only the first step. To move the rest of the way across that line, Gordimer would have had to continue reversing the priority of particular over abstract until a set of political ideas took precedence over the richness of her own perceptions. She would have had to build up the figure of Lionel to heroic proportions, then make sure every detail in the narrative fell into place around his advanced formulations. Instead of writing the kind of fiction that suggests a heaven and earth beyond any philosophy, she would have had to write the kind that reduces heaven and earth to a mere illustration, however well ornamented, of the philosophy she thinks is correct.

But in the case of *Burger's Daughter,* what philosophy would that be? Certainly not the hardline Communism embraced by Lionel. His one speech in the book is eloquently anti-apartheid, only sporadically Marxist. He appears almost entirely as a figure of protest, helpless in the clutches of the authorities, and by page 62, he is dead. Other characters who recite the Party line are immediately satirized, and the dense, poetic language of the narrative serves to set the simplifications of the Party line against the complexities of life in South Africa. Eventually it emerges that for Rosa, Communism is not an ideology so much as a memory of genuine contact between the races. Growing up with black playmates, one of whom was as close as a brother, she is a strange phenomenon: a white South African for whom the element of choice does not exist. Because of her father, she is automatically a nonperson in the eyes of the regime. And because of her upbringing, she need not adopt any particular political line to come into conflict with the system; she will do so by instinct, almost by blood—like a black.

As a literary device, this is extremely clever, because it enables Gordimer to create a white character whose virtues and choices don't make a bit of difference. When Rosa decides to return to South Africa from exile in Europe, she does so not out of acquired political convictions, but because of an encounter with the black companion of her childhood, Baasie Vulindlela. They meet at a fund-raising party in London, after which Baasie telephones Rosa in the middle of the night to give her the tongue-lashing of her life. The conversation is excruciating to the exact degree that it is personal—that the cause he accuses her of betraying is not the revolution in the abstract, but the bond that once existed between their families. All of Rosa's rationalizations for a safe, comfortable life in Europe are shattered by this phone call. The depths of her being literally rise against her as she hangs up, vomits, weeps, and returns to be placed in preventive detention.

As a political statement, however, the character of Rosa Burger is misleading. The South African Communist Party was still aboveground in the fifties, and insofar as its members behaved in a brotherly fashion toward black people, they deserve to be remembered. But remembering the good old days of friendship between the races is a far cry from endorsing the Third International. Gordimer knows this, but to some degree refuses to acknowledge it, so caught up is she in using the subsequent outlawed status of the Party as a way of putting Rosa in the same boat with the blacks. Critics have good reason to be confused, especially if they do not know the rest of her work.

Proof of Gordimer's unwillingness to propagate the ideology of the Left may be found in her most recent novel, *July's People,** which gives us the imagined scenario of South Africa in the midst of a successful black revolution. The situation of the novel seems to cry out for some sort of prescriptive statement, some response to the South African version of "What is to be done?" Yet rather than attempting to answer that question, *July's People* removes us from it. The three main characters are basically apolitical—a vaguely leftist white couple, Maureen and Bam Smales, and their black house servant, July. Taken by surprise when the liberation forces start shelling their Johannesburg suburb, the Smaleses and July drive several hundred miles north into the bush, where in exchange for the use of their jeep, July offers the Smaleses a refuge in his family homestead. In the weeks that follow, the white couple undergo a frightening and disorienting loss of trust in themselves and in their host. At one point they reflect on the contrast between what they are living through and the political abstractions they once found so meaningful:

> He struggled hopelessly for words that were not phrases from back there, words that would make the truth that must be forming here, out of the blacks, out of themselves . . . But the words would not come. They were blocked by an old vocabulary, "rural backwardness," "counter-revolutionary pockets," "failure to bring about peaceful change leading to civil war"—She knew all that, she had heard all that before it happened. And now that it had happened, it was an experience that couldn't be forethought. Not with the means they had satisfied themselves with. The words were not there; his mind, his anger, had no grip.

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Whatever the amount of sympathy or nostalgia Gordimer may feel toward the Left, specifically the South African Communist Party, it is safe to say that her own grip on words—and experience—is far too strong to allow her to structure her fiction according to the dictates of its ideology.

But that is not the whole story. Marxism is only one of several ideologies afoot in South Africa today. More popular, and more compelling for Gordimer, is the doctrine of reverse racism, black nationalism taken to the extreme of ideological belief in black cultural and moral superiority. In Gordimer's early novels especially, there is a kind of character who stands in diametric opposition to the carping and self-righteous white: the absolutely wonderful black. With these figures more than with any white character, Gordimer succumbs to the temptation of idealization. There is Sipho in *The Lying Days,* whose death spells the end of idealism for the young white protagonists; Steven Sitole in *A World of Strangers,* whose charisma wins adoration from both black and white; Gideon Shibolo in *Occasion for Loving,* who combines artistic genius with sexual power; and Luke Fokase in *The Late Bourgeois World,* toward whose "immense charm" Elizabeth Van Den Sandt turns as naturally as a flower toward the sun. Nor does the process stop with physical idealization. To varying degrees, all four of these early novels are racial melodramas, tracts in the sense that they stack the deck—pit the warm vitality of black communal life against the cold, desiccated manipulations of whites. Perhaps because the ideology is less systematic than Marxism—and much less embodied in institutions—we notice it less. But as a doctrinaire formula in literature, it is just as stultifyingly predictable. If Gordimer had stayed with it, she might never have written novels that compare with her short stories.

Writers who succeed with both forms are rare, yet Gordimer has done so—perhaps by using the short stories as a laboratory in which to experiment with different kinds of characters. Her fourth collection of stories, which appeared in 1965, contains a new departure: a white character who gains our sympathy without harboring a single objection to apartheid. "Good Climate, Friendly Inhabitants" is narrated in the cheerful, oblivious voice of a perfectly ordinary South African racist, a middle-aged woman who manages a service station in suburban Johannesburg. Rather lonely, with no family and few friends in the area, the woman feels a bit sheepish about getting along as well as she does with the black employees at the service station, in particular "the boss-boy, Jack." There is nothing sexual about the relationship; it is simply that the woman can't help noticing Jack's obvious good nature and intelligence. And when she gets involved with a white drifter, an unsavory type who is clearly taking advantage of her and may even prove to be dangerous, she can't help relying on the same qualities in Jack to help her escape the situation. Yet ironically neither she nor Jack can acknowledge the existence of their mutual regard, or the fact that he may very well have saved her life. The story ends with the final **comment:**

> That fellow [the drifter]'s never bothered me again. I never breathed a word about it to anybody—as I say, that's the trouble when you work alone in an office like I do, there's no one you can speak to. It just shows you, a woman on her own has got to look out; it's not only that it's not safe to walk about alone at night because of the natives, this whole town is full of people you can't trust.

Paradoxical as it may seem, this prejudiced white woman gains our sympathy because she is prejudiced. Her character obeys the same dynamic as that of the liberal white: The depths, the texture of her experience stand in ironic contrast to her conscious beliefs. Yet because those beliefs are wrong and foolish, Gordimer is free to develop that depth and that texture. As long as the woman goes on believing she has no one to trust, the actuality of her trust in Jack will affirm both her humanity and his.

This short story represents the germ of Gordimer's solution to the problem of racial melodrama, brought to fruition in her 1975 novel, *The Conservationist.* It is the story of Mehring, a wealthy Johannesburg industrialist who scorns liberal hypocrisy while taking pride in the honesty of his own motives, which are to live for what money can buy—such as a 400-acre farm north of the city he uses for a weekend retreat. Increasingly estranged from his liberal son and mistress, as well as his conservative business associates, Mehring spends more and more time on the farm, alone except for the blacks who manage the place. Early in the novel a corpse is discovered, a black man from the nearby location, murdered and dumped on Mehring's riverbank. The local police bury it lackadaisically on the spot—the way they would bury an animal—and for some reason, Mehring can't forget it. On a conscious level, he tells himself he couldn't care less what a bunch of thick-headed Boer cops do with a nameless black hoodlum. But on a deeper level of his mind, he becomes obsessed by the thought of that shallow grave and its lonely occupant. Driven by fears he cannot admit, he begins to fantasize about befriending Jacobus, the aged herdsman who is elder and arbiter to the other blacks.

Eventually, these fears and fantasies combine in a near-epiphany in which Mehring's prejudices give way to a perception of the shrewd face of Jacobus beneath the foolish one shown him as master. For a brief moment, Mehring yearns to ask that shrewd face for help. But he doesn't. And the fact that he doesn't is what makes him such a fascinating and successful creation. Like the woman in "Good Climate, Friendly Inhabitants," Mehring refuses to learn from his experience—enabling Gordimer to deepen and

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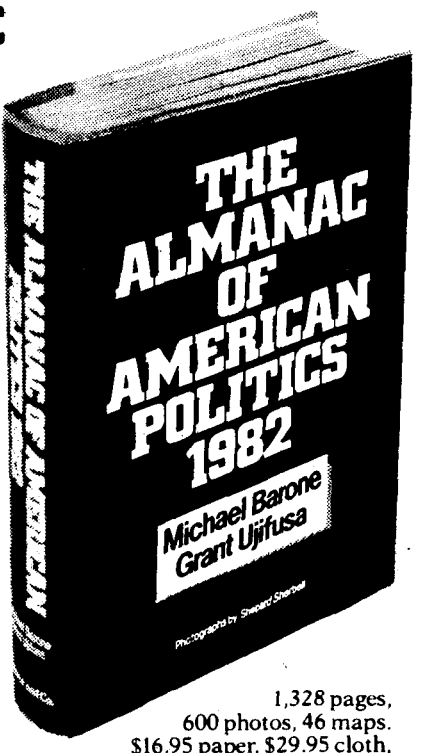
*__ALBERT R. HUNT,__ *The Wall Street Journal*



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sustain the revelations of that experience over the length of a novel.

Gordimer's most "political" novel, *Burger's Daughter,* seems to be about a white character making the correct political decision. Yet Rosa resembles Mehring in that her conscious rationalizations are foiled by the accumulation of her past and present experience. It is no accident that the main component in both these characters' experience is strong emotion toward someone who is black. For personal relationships with black people is the one freedom whites do not have. As forbidden fruit, it has tempted Gordimer more than once to romanticize the slightest contact between the races. Even in *Burger's Daughter,* a greeting between Rosa and the wife of a long-imprisoned black comrade becomes an occasion for rhapsody:

> To touch in women's token embrace against the live, night cheek of Marisa, seeing huge for a second the lake-flash of her eye, the lilac-pink of her inner lip against the translucent-edged teeth clearing from saliva as shells gleam from the sea, to enter for a moment the invisible magnetic field of the body of a beautiful creature and receive on oneself its imprint—breath misting and quickly fading on a glass pane—this was to immerse in another mode of perception.

Because of Gordimer's psychological motivation, we can understand why this passage waxes so purple. The embrace is occurring in public, before the disapproving face of a society that forbids and denies the reality of such contact. The excess of apartheid has inspired in Gordimer a similar excess: to glorify that which is unfairly debased.

In art, however, we do not require such excess to get the point. In fact, it is counterproductive, because as we have seen, idealization is the recourse of a fiction writer trying to sell an idea. To adorn interracial contact with special beauty is to suggest that such contact is an abstraction removed from the particularities of life—an ideal to be sought, rather than a reality to be affirmed in the face of arbitrary denial. It may of course be either, but the art of fiction is simply better equipped to perform the latter function—as becomes clear when we compare this "token embrace" to the power of the scene where Baasie telephones Rosa, and they argue "as if poking with a stick at some creature writhing between them." That "creature" is their feeling for each other, still alive in spite of the years of bloodshed and hate. Poke as they will, they cannot quite kill it.

The same comparison could be made between a possible tract projecting the glories of the coming revolution, and *July's People. July's People* gives us the transformation of South Africa not as ideology brought to life, but as the wonderfully subtle emergence of black July and white Maureen Smales, who have known each other for fifteen years exclusively through the ritual of houseboy and mistress, into a new relationship where they must treat each other as equals. Negotiating over seemingly petty matters such as possession of the keys to the jeep, the two of them go through an odd and passionate contest of wills, each trying to seize the advantage in a game neither knows how to play. It is scarcely a love story: more like an old silent feud finally forced out into the open—a feud each has with himself as much as with the other. Like an eggshell with something alive pecking its way out, the brittle ritual cracks off in pieces. In its mixture of curiosity, fury, and insult the transformation is nothing short of profound. And the statement it makes is profoundly political: Gordimer at her best, setting up yet another contrast between the ruling ideology of her country and a human reality too rich, complex, and mysterious for it. Her ways of doing this are as infinitely variable as her characters.

The climax of *July's People* is the arrival of a military helicopter, presumably full of victorious liberators—whether from Russia or Cuba or Mozambique, no one knows. It lands in the forest on the far side of the river, yet before its occupants can make contact with the people of the homestead, the novel ends. It is almost as though Gordimer were making not only a political statement, but also a literary one: that her fictional powers can be used to detract from ideology, but not to support it. That she can protest, but not prescribe. That she can continue to liberate her characters from apartheid, but not deliver them into the hands of a new dogma. □

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THIRD WORLD COUNTERREVOLUTIONARIES

by Fred Barnes

On a summer morning in 1948, General Lucius D. Clay huffily summoned Professor Ludwig Erhard to his office. As commander of the American occupation zone in Germany, the general wanted to know why Erhard, acting on his own initiative as economic chief of the embryonic German government, had peremptorily abolished food rationing and wage and price controls. "Herr Erhard, my advisers tell me that what you have done is a terrible mistake," said Clay. "What do you have to say to that?" Erhard, disheveled looking but unbowed, responded without pause. "Herr General, pay no attention to them! My own advisers tell me the same thing."

From this fateful encounter was born the free market economy in Germany. As Erhard unfolded his vision of German prosperity through the untethered play of market forces, Clay's skepticism dissolved. He became a convert, against the advice of an international brigade of officials, academics, and experts who declared that hopes for material progress and financial security in poor countries rest with a state-controlled economy. The result: the *Wirtschaftswunder*, the German economic miracle.

Now, the German experience is being repeated in the Third World in what amounts to a capitalist counterrevolution of global dimensions. The gurus of economic development still offer the old advice. Their recipe for the advancement of poor nations remains a state-run economy that puts first emphasis on redistributing wealth, not creating it. Central planning, said Swedish socialist Gunnar Myrdal, is "the first condition of progress." A breathtaking transfer of money to poor folks is "necessary" for economic success, claimed the ballyhooed report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues in 1979. But, like Erhard and Clay, an increasing number of leaders in the Third World are brushing aside this advice and embracing free market economics. The result: booming economies in the unlikeliest places.

Indeed, one of the most extraordinary aspects of the turn to capitalism is that it is flourishing in every type of political soil. Low taxes, free trade, and minimal intervention have given Hong Kong, a British colony with appointed leaders, the most vibrant economy in the world. The same policies have produced an economic renaissance in Chile and Uruguay, which are run by military cliques. Pursued a shade less vigorously, they have revived Sri Lanka, a democracy whose economy had stagnated for decades. In authoritarian countries like South Korea and Taiwan, capitalism has ignited phenomenal economic growth, even in the teeth of oil shocks and a worldwide recession. In the Ivory Coast and Singapore, nations with mildly autocratic rule, it has generated two decades of stable growth and broadly shared prosperity.

Those are the clear-cut success stories. In three other countries—one authoritarian, one democratic, one Communist—the steps toward free market economics have been tentative and thus the results, though striking, are less conclusive. After signing the Camp David accords with Israel in 1979, President Anwar Sadat of Egypt pushed through deep cuts in personal income tax rates. The economy rebounded, but was left burdened with lavish food subsidies. In Israel last spring, the government of Menachem Begin, struggling for re-election, boldly slashed a mélange of sales, inheritance, and income taxes, producing some supply-side effects in increased revenues. But some of the cuts were temporary and other free market policies were not pursued. More dramatic is Communist China's use of market forces and incentives to spur productivity, expand private farming, and encourage foreign entrepreneurs. If this turns out to be more than a flirtation with capitalism, it could be the most significant free market breakthrough since the collapse of mercantilism two centuries ago.

Even if China backslides, the case for capitalism in the Third World—a truly awkward term for economically backward countries—has been made. And a collection of noxious myths about economic progress has been destroyed. For starters, the overarching notion that the path to national wealth is paved by government manipulation of the economy has been discredited. Which country has the freest economy in black Africa? The Ivory Coast. Which has the highest per capita income? The Ivory Coast. Equally tarnished is the idea that wealth is widely shared only when redistribution is aggressively pressed. Where is it least pressed in black Africa? The Ivory Coast. Where is wealth more broadly distributed, the Ivory Coast or socialist Tanzania and Zambia? Guess.

Another favorite of planners at the United Nations, prestigious universities, and various foreign ministries in the West is that countries without natural resources are doomed to economic anemia. This has been disproved by the spectacular material advance in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore, which have scant resources. So, too, overpopulation is supposed to foreclose substantial economic improvement. But Hong Kong's population doubled from 2.2 million to 4.5 million from 1954 to 1977, as its economy blossomed and wages soared. Finally, the theory that infant industries should be nourished by high tariffs and subsidies has been undercut. When Chile and Uruguay followed this theory, their economies slumped. When they turned to free trade and non-intervention, their economies surged.

For all its successes, the capitalist counterrevolution was hardly inevitable. It was spawned by a few men—a dozen, maybe—and if two or three of them had balked, the movement to free market economics in the Third World might have been stillborn. Obviously, Erhard was crucial. General Douglas MacArthur, as military governor of postwar Japan, was pivotal as well. MacArthur recognized the need for tax cuts in spite of the government's hunger for more revenues. "Taxes

Fred Barnes is Washington correspondent for the Baltimore Sun.

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were incredibly heavy, and for some of the poor people amounted to confiscation of everything they had," he explained. "There had been a tax rebellion in the later stages of the war. Some tax collectors were too frightened to even try to collect any longer." With thriving capitalist systems, Japan and (to a lesser extent) Germany became models for Third World emulation.

A confirmed advocate of free enterprise like John Cowperthwaite, the financial secretary of Hong Kong in the 1960s, didn't need a successful new model to convince him that the tiny colony would benefit from unchained capitalism. Neither did Felix Houphouet-Boigny, the president of the Ivory Coast since its independence in 1960. He never wavered in his devotion to free market economics. But Lee Yuan Kew, the prime minister of Singapore and a lapsed socialist, was looking for a model. "You have to learn how to succeed, to see who performs better, and then copy them," he said. Singapore copied Japan. J.R. Jayewardne of Sri Lanka also sought a model of economic success. Since his election as president in 1977, Sri Lanka has copied Singapore.

Often, a negative model has been influential, one where policies palpably failed. Park Chung-Hee, the Korean president from 1961 to 1979, acknowledged that his protectionist, high tax policies has led to economic troubles. He shifted to free trade and lower taxes in 1964. Sergio de Castro, one of several Chilean economists trained in free market principles at the University of Chicago, was acutely aware of the shortcomings of both Salvador Allende's Marxist policies and Augusto Pinochet's initial austerity policies. Now finance minister, he has kept Chile on a course of low taxes, reduced tariffs, and sound money. In China, Zhao Ziyang promoted profit incentives to boost lagging productivity in Sichuan province. Output rose 80 percent from 1976 to 1979, and Zhao rose from provincial governor to deputy prime minister to prime minister.

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SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF EDITOR, PUBLISHER, BUSINESS MANAGER, OR OWNER: Susan C. France /Business Manager

The rebirth of capitalism in the Third World has come in three phases. The first was in the 1960s and involved the Pacific gang of four—South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore. It followed the resurgence of Japan, whose economic success had lifted it far above Third World status. South Korea and Taiwan advanced on parallel tracks, fostering industrialization but not at the expense of agriculture. They eschewed collectivization, price controls on food, and heavy taxation of farmers to aid industry, all policies pursued elsewhere at a cost of stupendous inefficiency. With thousands of small landholders farming for profit, productivity spurted, far outpacing that of Communist China and North Korea.

In South Korea and Taiwan, textiles and electronics flourished, and even government industries were required to be competitive. South Korea, almost alone in the world, maintained an economic growth rate of 10 percent right through the oil price increase and recession of 1974 and 1975. And growth in both countries bestowed new wealth on all. It "was particularly impressive because it brought with it early and almost as a by-product a more egalitarian distribution of income and wealth than is found in most other countries," noted Herman Kahn. "Some socialist states have achieved a more egalitarian distribution of income and wealth, but only at great economic and human costs."

Just as impressive was Hong Kong's performance—10 percent growth from 1960 to 1980. Taxes have been kept remarkably low, with a top rate of 15 percent on personal income. The flow of capital, foreign or domestic, is unregulated. Trade is free. Government intervention is non-existent. Unions are absent because of progressive anti-unionism in the form of relatively high wages. And colonial officials like Cowperthwaite know exactly why this unfettered capitalism works. "I still believe that, in the long run, the aggregate of the decisions of individual judgment in a free economy, even if often mistaken, is likely to do less harm than the centralized decisions of a government, and certainly the harm is likely to be counteracted faster," he said. "It has to be recognized, and it is recognized over a large part of our daily life, that the community's scarce economic resources can be efficiently allocated only by the price mechanism."

Singapore, with a population half the size of Hong Kong's five million, is not quite so free. Income taxes reach a top marginal rate of 55 percent and forced savings amount to one-third of a company's wage bill. But trade is free and market forces reign. Growth averages nearly 9 percent, and inflation was held to minus 2 percent as recently as 1976. "We proved that certain principles worked," Prime Minister Lee told writer Anthony Sampson. "Whether they're acceptable is a different matter, and other countries disagree. It's a question of priorities . . . It's not that we're superior. It's that our approach is right."

Along with the Pacific four, the Ivory Coast has been booming under capitalism since the 1960s, mainly because President Houphouet-Boigny has rejected the conventional wisdom on black African development. He declined to expel Europeans when his country received independence from France in 1960. Thousands remain as officials and advisers. "Not that we have no gray matter here, but Europe is ahead of us in technology," Houphouet-Boigny said.

Small-scale farming and industry have fared well, as the president looks scornfully on the grandiose agricultural or industrial schemes cherished by other African leaders. In Tanzania, President Julius Nyerere nationalized farmlands and forcibly moved 14 million people into *ujamaa* settlements. If other poor countries "do not choose socialism, they will continue in a state of weakness, they will be maltreated, oppressed, exploited and will never realize true independence," said Nyerere. But Tanzania, once a maize exporter, now imports large amounts of maize. The Ivory Coast exports rice, cocoa, and coffee at great profit and has attracted one million African immigrants. "There is no miracle," said Houphouet-Boigny. "Just the work of men, freely furnished."

The second phase of the revival of capitalism occurred in the mid-1970s in Chile, Uruguay, and Sri Lanka. Chile is usually remembered as the country with the astounding inflation rate of 350 percent under Communist President Allende in 1973. But what is overlooked is that inflation reached 500 percent in 1974 and 374 percent in 1975 after General Pinochet had supplanted Allende in a bloody coup.

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With copper prices about to buckle, Pinochet was advised that only "shock treatment" would keep the economy from absolute wreckage. The treatment: supply-side tax cuts.

These were devised by a team of young economists, a number of whom studied under Milton Friedman and Arnold Harbergèr at the University of Chicago. Income and profits taxes were trimmed substantially, and, in best supply-side fashion, revenues increased. The economy, which shrunk 13 percent in 1975, grew by nearly 9 percent in 1977. Inflation sagged to less than 35 percent in 1980 and to 5.4 percent in the first five months of 1981. De Castro, who dines with supply-side economist Arthur Laffer when he visits Los Angeles, draws a mighty lesson from Chile's economic turmoil. It "is a good example of how the statist socialism does not lead to progress, stability, respect for personal rights and a genuine democratic existence," he said. ". . . Progress is represented by personal initiative, economic liberty and private enterprise."

The experience in Uruguay was almost identical, except that the finance ministry went so far as to eliminate the personal income tax in 1974, a year after the military interceded. Uruguay's economy was suffering from bloated government spending, price controls, and lofty tariffs. No more. For two years, the government has run a surplus. Last August, Finance Minister Valentin Arismendi went on television, in the words of a State Department cable, to "puncture any expectations of more state intervention in the economy." Aid to farmers would only come "at the expense of some other sector of the Uruguayan public." So forget it, he said.

Perhaps the sharpest turnabout has come in what is still called the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. After 20 years of welfare extravagance, price controls, and food rations, the economy had slowed to a near-halt. And four years ago Sri Lankans, well educated but impoverished, voted the socialists out and neo-capitalists in. Taxes were cut, import and price controls scrapped, and subsidies reduced. An "investment promotion zone" for foreign companies was established outside Colombo, the capital. It offers, the government boasts, "a rare opportunity to earn more profits, 100 percent tax-free." Or, as President Jayewardne puts it, "We are open to serve as a capitalist organization and I often use the words, 'Let the robber barons come' to that area." And they have, helping the Sri Lankan economy to soar.

But why such unabashed capitalism in a tropical nation that has known only more and more socialism for decades? Trade Minister Lalith Athulathmudal gave this explanation to journalist Ben Wattenberg:

> We are in a post-socialist era, an era where slogans no longer are believed to be ipso facto. They have to be proved. . . . If you live in a country such as ours, a very poor country, at least 50 percent of the people in poverty, and if you assess the problems of the country in your heart, then there is no question what is paramount is concern for underprivileged. And that makes you think a socialist philosophy is the way out. . . . in theory, it's perfect, but what I have experienced and what the people of this country have experienced [is] that in practice it means something quite different. And in practice, it often means the poorest don't have their lot improved at all. I mean, the poor just could get nothing, but at the same time, the preachers of socialism, the leaders, were enjoying the benefits of commercial and political privilege. To my mind today . . . we have taken a socialist goal, but in practical terms socialism means whatever means can be employed to improve the lot of the poor. If that includes private enterprise, then that's also a good object, because if that gives jobs, if that increases incomes, if that gives better cultivation methods, if that means better management of your industries, well that's good enough socialism for me. ➡

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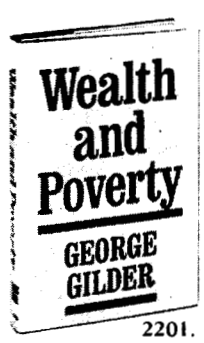

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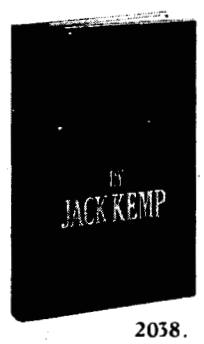

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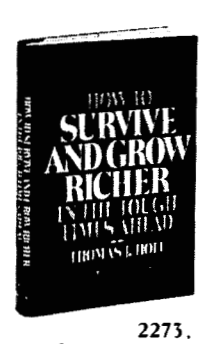

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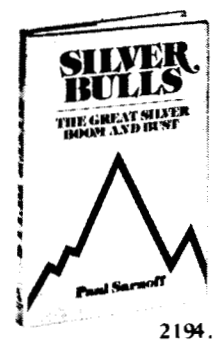

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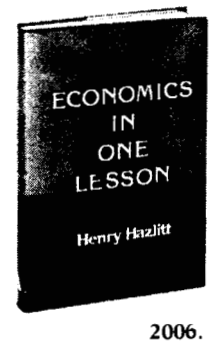

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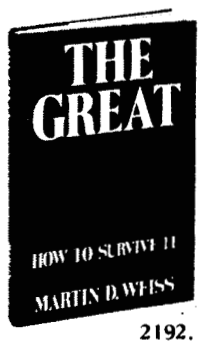

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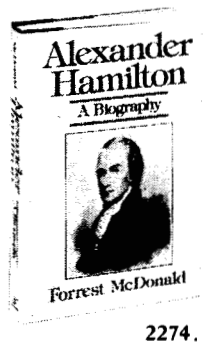

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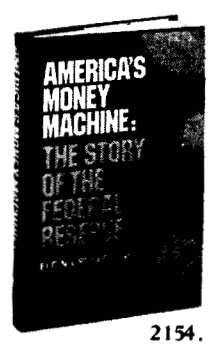

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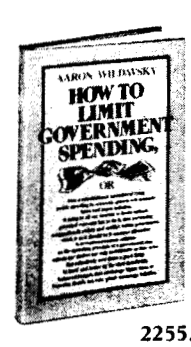

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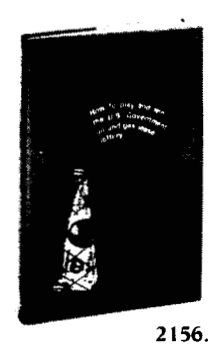
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In Communist China, along with Egypt, Israel, and several Latin American countries, the critical locale of the third phase of the capitalist reawakening, leaders are not itching to proclaim "the post-socialist era," but they are willing to come awfully close to that. The government is determined, Deputy Prime Minister Yao Yilin said last spring, "to regulate the economy according to the pressures of supply and demand in the market, within the state plan." Incentives abound. Thousands of industrial companies, though state owned, are allowed to keep a healthy portion of their profits and use the money virtually any way factory managers desire, notably for fringe benefits and bonuses for workers. Farmers have been given permission to double the size of their private plots, and the marketing of homemade handicrafts has official sanction.

Moreover, foreign capitalists are being urged to establish factories in China's new "enterprise zones." A British entrepreneur, J.T. Wakefield, found Chinese bureaucrats downright helpful when he asked to set up a factory near Hong Kong for producing fishing flies. "I found the planning authority personnel in Shenzhen most cooperative," he said. "They would discuss any matter with me without inhibition. . . . When I was traveling to and fro, I found the facilities for foreigners at the Chinese border to be much better organized than on the British side."

Clearly, something is going on here, though it may not be exactly what Adam Smith had in mind. But Smith would doubtless be pleased with the nuggets of free market wisdom that stud the (Chinese) *Beijing Review* each week. "An excessive issuance of currency inevitably gives rise to inflation," an article on the evils of "leftist thinking" declared. Another said "the purpose of socialist production" is to meet people's demand for "material goods." And what could be more indicative of the birth pangs of capitalism than the report of a poll of Communist youth on their favorite proverb. Some 2.5 percent chose, "Everyone for himself and the devil can take the hindmost." □

THE METAPHYSICAL MARTINI

by Werner J. Dannhauser

I have never met a martini I did not like. Under no circumstances would I assert that any martini is as good as any other; my mind may be soaked, but not in rampant egalitarianism. I am willing to argue, however, that while the best martini demands to be called "perfect," the worst is nevertheless passable, and far better than no martini at all.

Surprisingly enough, so wondrous a drink has failed to spawn much of a literature that celebrates its wonders. It may well be that most sane men would rather drink martinis than read about them and would rather read about them than write about them. Yet that tempting explanation fails to satisfy, simply because martinis can be held in one hand, so that anyone who can talk and chew gum at the same time can just as well teach himself simultaneously to sip a martini and to read or write about it.

Nor will it do to contend that the absence of a library of works on the martini constitutes an undisguised blessing because writing about them would resemble what Leo Strauss once called "the loathsome business of explaining a joke." That was in another context and besides the great man's imposing list of virtues did not include a love of martinis. A mystique surrounds martinis, to be sure, but it does not suffer from an attempt at articulation. Indeed, for many of us the joy of drinking martinis is enhanced by talking about the joy of drinking martinis.

What, then, can the matter be? The safest explanation takes into account the drink's youthfulness. The martini was born in the nineteenth century and has flourished—perhaps peaked—in ours. The occurrence of phenomena necessarily antedates their comprehension, as Hegel might have remarked, and no wise man tries to hurry history, as Adlai Stevenson did in fact maintain, so true understanding may have to await the fullness of time, to borrow Martin Luther's felicitous phrase.

The patience we need while hoping for the appearance of the martini's philosopher (not to be confused with the philosopher's martini) will surely be strengthened by a reading of Lowell Edmunds' *The Silver Bullet: The Martini in American Civilization.** It can hardly be called the definitive book on the subject, but it is a pioneering work in the best sense. It abounds with information, including the above tidbits about the age of the martini; it luxuriates in insights educing the shock of recognition; it promulgates bold postulates demanding reflection and attempts at verification; in short, it performs an invaluable service and puts all of us in the author's debt.

I learned a great deal from this book. For example, I found out that Franklin D. Roosevelt changed not only the face of America, but the contents of the traditional martini—by adding fruit juice. I was taught almost more than I could absorb about vermouth, that most necessary of evils required to make a good martini—it is a "fortified wine." I discovered poetry by Auden, *New Yorker* cartoons, pictures of various permissible glasses, and a bibliography that will enable me to begin research on Scotch and other estimable beverages should the spirit ever move me to study spirits.

I mention the above matters to convey something of this slender volume's richness, not to suggest that Professor Edmunds devotes himself primarily to the collection of intriguing trivia. Nothing could be further from the truth. After the briefest of introductions, the author at once turns to the task of giving an adequate account of the martini. He attributes the perennial fascination the martini exerts to three fundamental ambiguities surrounding it and constituting "the source of its symbolic power." First of all, the martini comes across as both civilized and uncivilized. On the one hand, it is consumed by solitary drinkers who become nasty and brutish, if not short; on the other hand, it serves as the centerpiece of various social and communal experiences that make for better living in this blessed land, and others emulating our ways. It can act as a spur both to love and hate.

Secondly, the martini appears both in the guise of the classic and the individual. For Professor Edmunds, a distinguished classicist, the classic denotes the unitary and perfect, as opposed to the sickly romantic. One suspects he would subscribe to Winckelmann's beautiful description of the ancients as characterized by "noble simplicity and serene grandeur." That can be said of martinis as well, at least half the time. The other half, the martini provides a lovely playground for idiosyncrasy and eccentricity. Some spend a happy lifetime pursuing the ideal perfect martini, a drink unsullied by anything merely personal, while others use the cocktail hour as a fine vehicle for creativity and self-expression.

Finally, according to Edmunds, the "Martini is in itself both sensitive and tough." It was adored by the sensitive W. Somerset Maugham as well as the tough James Bond, and the sensitive Auden sang of its toughness in sensitive verse.

The author obviously has a taste not only for martinis but for ambiguity; at any rate he does not directly attempt to reconcile the opposites he

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documents. Instead, he goes on to detail the "simple, unambiguous messages" conveyed by the martini, propositions which "function as the propaganda, as it were," for the martini and "play on several common prejudices." The reader never quite knows whether and to what extent Professor Edmunds shares those prejudices. Be that as it may, the seven messages sent out by the martini are that it is American and nothing else, urban rather than rural, upper class, a man's and not a woman's drink, optimistic and not pessimistic, for adults and not children, of the past, albeit of the living past, and not the present. These propositions are obviously debatable, but they are stated so reasonably one finds himself wishing he could discuss them with the author, over a martini, of course.

Having provided the reader with ample drink for thought, Professor Edmunds concludes on a profound note by relating the martini's nickname, "Silver Bullet," to its deepest meaning. He ingeniously connects it with the Lone Ranger, who also "embodies all the characteristically American ambiguity" by being gentle and tough, a loner in the service of the common good.

Such a skeletal outline necessarily violates the book on which it reports, for which I apologize, especially since I must now divulge some differences I have with the author. The book is admirable, but good books deserve and demand the toughest possible criticisms. Here, then, are mine.

Let me begin with trifles. Like any pioneering work, his book omits a bit of needed information here and there. Two examples must suffice. Many of us do not really know what bitters are and the author fails to tell us. What is more serious, in his generous selection of martini drinkers from American literature the author fails to include Melville Godwin, from John P. Marquand's *Melville Godwin, U.S.A.* Rumor has it that the character was modeled on Eisenhower, in which case his predilection for ever drier martinis as the years went by would take on added significance. Moreover, his inclusion might well shed light on a question that vexes me at least once a year: Is Marquand worth reviving?

This is as good a point as any to introduce some methodological reservations about the author's approach. For mysterious reasons of his own, the author relies too much on examples from literature instead of real life, an especially problematic procedure inasmuch as most of the fiction and authors he cites must be described as second rate. To put it bluntly, this little jewel of a book contains too many references to Bernard De Voto. It would be churlish to blame the author for the martini's inexplicable failure to find its Homer, but one does feel that Professor Edmunds might have concentrated on consumers instead of producers.

By that I do not mean to imply that his study lacks historical perspective. On the contrary, at times the author almost falls into the dastardly pit of historicism, the insidious doctrine that one can explain things only in the light of their origins. He is saved above all by his familiarity with classical philosophy, as a passing reference to Aristotle's distinction between nature and history (in the *Poetics*) suggests, but he is not saved often and radically enough. The reader finds too many anecdotes of the past and too few of the scintillating generalizations of which Professor Edmunds is quite capable. I commend to him Marion Magid's sage observation that one cannot order a martini at the bar of history.

In the absence of a poet, what the martini needs above all is a philosopher. This study, however, forthrightly settles for less, declaring itself as belonging to "the field of bacchanology." Now science surely has its uses and some of my best friends are scientists, but a work owing even a tiny bit, as this one does, to Roland Barthes errs on the side of being too chic in its scientific bent. The author realizes as much by sounding suitably embarrassed when mentioning matters like "the semantics of material culture." The science yearns to be more than science but Professor Edmunds tends to shy away from what is above science by virtue of being its queen. He avoids philosophy.

Now for most of us the avoidance of philosophy is a matter of self-understanding and suitable modesty; philosophers are hard to find and we simply realize that we do not belong to the world's most exclusive club. But Professor Edmunds does not strike me as a humble man. I have no intention to give umbrage and I suspect Professor Edmunds will not take it, being familiar with Aristotle, who thinks of humility as a vice. I do not think he feels he is below philosophy, because I fear he thinks himself above it. He writes like a genuine member of a genuine nobility, for whom philosophy is a mere game. He is, in short, a perfect gentleman. I have nothing at all against gentlemen, and if so few of my best friends can be called that it is because gentlemen shun me and not because I avoid them. But the author's nobility does at rare times tinge his excellent book with a bit of dubiousness, and since I must love truth more than I love Edmunds I must also force myself to mention two shortcomings.

The first of these is what might be called false purism. Believing as I have already confessed that there is no such thing as a bad martini, I also would not hesitate—in fact I don't—to use tap water for making ice cubes, to pour in the vermouth in a cavalier if sparing way, scorning measurement, and in madcap moments to experiment recklessly. What is more, I would drink warm martinis out of dixie-cups without blinking or blushing. Rather than continue with this catalogue of what some would call crimes—I have more, much more, to confess—I will add a base truth about

says that resources are getting more plentiful and that we benefit from population growth.

The food situation worldwide is improving rather than deteriorating. We are not "running out" of natural resources. Instead—though it is hard to believe—natural resources and energy have been getting less scarce for decades. The supply of cropland is increasing around the world. And pollution in the U.S. is on the decline.

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drinking martinis, one which the author is too noble to accentuate: Martini drinkers drink to get drunk, or at least to get high. One does not denigrate martinis in the least, I insist, by emphasizing the efficiency with which they do the job we assign them. Let no one sneer at the power of our national cocktail. We vote as many, but we drink as one. And let nobody deny that martini drinkers show great interest in what alcohol does to us. I have met many martini drinkers and loved not a few, but I have yet to encounter one who drinks *only* martinis.

Probity, always exacting, also demands that I take issue with Professor Edmunds over a second and closely related matter. One does him no injustice to call him a martini elitist. Now let me make one thing perfectly clear. In general, I admire elitists. In democracies they are absolutely essential to combat leveling tendencies and to return to the word "discrimination" its pristine sense. But it is no less true that for the health of democracy we elitists share as many of the fine things of life with the many as possible. That ennobles democracy and safeguards us elitists at one and the same time. Some things must always remain beyond the ken of the many, alas, but not martinis. Making them can be taught to the meanest capacities and enjoying them to the coarsest palates. We who are true conservatives should prize magnanimity very highly, and that virtue demands of us that we reach out to bring the uncommon martini to the common man.

But I have no wish to engage in unseemly disputations with Professor Edmunds. His book brought me great pleasure and I am grateful to him. In a small way it even resembles Aristotle's *Ethics*. Reading it one is bound to think of happy times in one's life. Even as I write this my mind becomes warm with tender recollections.

I remember many a communal rite of a pre-dinner martini or two. The occasions have varied from reunions with dear friends to ceremonies before dinner parties. I love the preparation, the toast, the first cool, bracing sip. In some ways I am especially partial to the toast. My favorite is *l'chayyim*—to life—which I proffer to all friends who are Jewish or would like to be. But I am graced with courtesy of the heart when it comes to toasts. As a good host I suit the words to the situation. For example, when I drink with my students I love to salute their triumphs, for I am made happy by their happiness. It ought to go without saying, but it doesn't, that I enjoy drinking with my students. On those joyous occasions I may even have taught some of them something more valuable than drinking martinis —a tall order. In any event, my students and I constantly expose as foolish prattle the ideas one sometimes hears bandied about concerning teaching as a power relationship.

I remember also the martini of the relationship. I think of sitting in peace with my beloved. Call her Jenny. We sit together, talk of common plans, let speech suffuse itself in love, feel blessed in our closeness, safe in trust; the very air grows intimate.

I remember, finally, the solitary martini. I put away my work, the daily drudgeries. Relaxing, I prepare my drink with loving care. Then I sit back and think of once and future deeds and speeches, but mostly of the past. I summon up the living and the dead, rehearse old scenes of tenderness and wit. Then time melts slowly as betrayals lose their sting. My friends and I are young again, alive with hope. Grace smiles on me as Mr. Death assumes a modest stance, and all the while martinis make the music for my memories. □

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THE TALKIES

MUCH ADO ABOUT MACHO

by John Podhoretz

Perhaps there is no dirtier word in present-day discourse than the Spanish term "macho," deriving from *machismo,* which I suppose would be rather inadequately translated as "manliness." A violent man, who likes to hit women, is called "macho"; Alexander Haig, who wishes to face the Soviet Union from a position of strength, is called "macho"; anyone who suggests rather carelessly that women should do the dishes, or make dinner, or raise the children, is called "macho." The opprobrium which men receive in the press (and, I assume, at home, although I have no immediate experience of this) if they express any view, or perform any action, which is not in concert with the current, Enlightened view of proper behavior—an egalitarian sort of behavior which, at the very least, focuses entirely upon just in what ways any action taken would be offensive to particularly political and vociferous women—is indiscriminate. Dr. Tarnower seems, if we take Anne Bernay's word in the *New Republic,* to have been murdered because of his machismo, perhaps even rightly so; Adolf Hitler's crimes can similarly be attributed to machismo. In short, any expression of what used to be considered the "manly" virtues—bravery in combat, excellence in physical pursuits, the protection of women and children—has become a rhetorical crime.

These thoughts have been prompted by a new British movie, *Chariots of Fire,* which portrays four Englishmen as they pursue gold medals at the 1924 Olympics. It tells the true story of Harold Abrahams and Eric Liddell, who at those games became, respectively, the fastest 100-meter and 400-meter runners in the world. They and their friends, Andrew Lindsay and Aubrey Montague, become entranced by the sport of running—the lesser two characters for reasons not specified, Eric because of religious devotion ("God put me here for a purpose; but he also made me *fast,*" he tells his missionary sister), Harold because running is his way of proving himself an Englishman, and a man, in spite of his Jewishness.

This is, quite simply, a gorgeous, powerfully affecting movie. It buries itself in the England directly following the First World War, a country full of will and self-possession. The team that gathers for the Olympics is in itself a sign of the democratic spirit which would begin to suffuse England at just about this time: It includes a nobleman (Andrew Lindsay is a Lord), a Jew, a Scot (Eric), and a very middle-class, self-effacing fellow (Montague). The veneer of the very Anglo-Saxon Caius College of Cambridge University is cracked by the enrollment of the Jewish Abrahams. And, at the Olympics, the lowly Liddell, born in China of missionary parents of the Church of Scotland, sits in a room with the Prince of Wales, a Duke, and two Lords, and is able to stare them down as they attempt to sway him from his decision not to enter a race on the Sabbath. And while Lord Andrew Lindsay manages only a silver medal at the Olympics, both Liddell and Abrahams take the gold—no longer will the cream of England be found on the playing fields of Eton.

Chariots of Fire gives one joy not only in its very subtle, quiet rendering of England after the first War, but in its profound evocation of a time forever lost—a time when England was still grand, before the Depression and before the youth of that country fell into the vague radicalism and pacifism most notoriously expressed in the Oxford Pledge of 1934, when thousands of the "bright young men" vowed never to die for king or country. It was a time of manners, and style (as beautifully caught in the scenes at Cambridge, at which dinners were attended in evening dress, and where students were at all times told that their position as the "elite" required a certain assumption of responsibility to their fellow men and their country); and the movie succeeds where most other historical dramas fail. Quite simply, it draws us in and makes us wish we were there.

It evokes not only a place, and a time, but a spirit. These uncommonly intense, beautiful young men, desiring greatness, seem the embodiment

John Podhoretz is film critic of The American Spectator *and editor of* Counterpoint.

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of those now nearly vanished qualities of manliness that are today so reviled. They wish to persevere because they wish to ennoble themselves; Harold drives himself to prove that a Jew can better other men, while Eric sees his gift for running as God-given and, thus, his success as an expression of his faith. The rivalry established between Eric and Harold early in the movie turns into comradeship by the end, and this sort of comradeship is expressed by their teammates throughout: Montague listens attentively as Harold speaks of his fears and desires, and Andrew gives up his place in the 400-meter run so that Eric can participate in a race which is not run on a Sunday.

To be sure, women are slighted in the film; Harold's liaison with a beautiful actress is studied only perfunctorily, and the only other woman of note in the film is Eric's disapproving sister, who fears that her brother is leaving the sacred for the profane through his running. (She comes around in the end, of course.) But it is not chivalry the movie attempts to portray; it is the manly spirit which finds its apotheosis in the Greek ideal of beauty and strength. And this spirit it portrays peerlessly.

When the movie is released, it will, no doubt, be met with the enthusiastic response that greets any sign of life from the dormant United Kingdom. Hugh Hudson, who has directed it in what I can only think of a state of grace, and Colin Welland, who has contributed a creditable, intelligent screenplay, will be saluted for their British civility and charm, while the cast—including Ben Cross and Ian Charleson who are extraordinary as Harold and Eric, respectively, and John Gielgud and Lindsay Anderson as the arch Masters of Cambridge—will be commended for that quiet and undemonstrative style that itself means "culture" for those of our elite who are devoted to watching British reruns on public television. Then, it will be criticized, as was *The Deer Hunter* before it, for its emphasis on the relations between man and man (what is now called, in psychobabblical terms, "male bonding"). And, perhaps, when better days are upon us, the real virtues of *Chariots of Fire* will be recognized and appreciated: its depiction of human strength, and its evocation of a time when the British could still think it was in their power to rebuild Jerusalem on England's green and pleasant land. □

THE HOLIDAY PRISON INN

by John Nollson

As everyone knows, the nation is in the grip of a serious shortage of prison cells. Not only are the prisons overcrowded, but, even worse, they are in disrepair and otherwise unattractive. This is bleak testimony to the baleful consequences of governmental interference in the workings of the free market, and not much is going to improve until the system of rent control for prisons is abolished.

Fortunately, there have been some positive signs, though this isn't yet a nationwide trend. Several states, noticing that their prisons as currently administered do not yield a proper return on the capital invested in them, have begun to encourage their conversions into condominiums, or, sometimes, into co-operatives. The plan here is to make the building of prisons an attractive investment for the private sector. And it seems to be working. The principal factor is that prisoners, unlike tenants, cannot move out just because their building goes condo. When the warden announces that they will have an opportunity to buy their prison cells, they have no choice but to sign up. In this way, wardens need no longer contend with rent strikes.

Similarly, we are learning that outmoded zoning regulations have placed an unnecessary crimp in the supply of prison housing. Traditionally, jurisdictions have been prejudiced against high-rise prisons. Yet, there is no particular reason why economies of scale ought not to be employed. Why build six five-story prisons, when a single thirty-story structure will do?

Franchising has also shown itself to be a very useful tool. Some of our better departments of criminal sociology have been examining the corporate histories of Holiday Inn, Quality Courts, and the like. Hotel chains, in particular, have pioneered in the design and construction of escape-proof buildings. But beyond the simple fact that it is impossible to get out of one of these buildings if one decides to check in, there is the additional security factor of motel siting. The sites are of two types. The first is close to busy boulevards in the vicinity of airports. Ingenious engineering ensures that one cannot leave the premises, except to face certain death in a busy street. Or, the motel tends to be placed in the middle of nowhere, visible from the road, to be sure, yet inaccessible and, therefore, escape-proof.

The fact is that the basic design of the contemporary hostelry is almost perfectly suited to the housing of criminal elements—right down to the smoke detector that doesn't work. By instituting a system of prison franchising, correctional administrations will thus save an awful lot of money. Labor costs are usually low, especially when the prisoners are organized into the work force that actually builds the facility. When administered as a condominium, the prison becomes a morale booster: To the satisfaction of building one's own cell with one's own hands there can be added the even deeper satisfaction of private ownership. And since the supply of prisoners is sure to rise, departing inmates will be able to sell their cells to the next tenant while turning a tidy profit. The traditional system of paroling a prisoner with a twenty dollar bill and a new suit can now give way to starting him out with a capital gain. And, if he's shrewd enough to invest that gain in a new primary residence, his profits go untaxed. It's the kind of savings incentive the American economy so desperately needs.

Like everything new the trend toward remanding the construction of new prisons into the custody of the private sector has met with opposition from the statists. They allude to the fact that any building whose walls are so weak that you can put your fist through them cannot possibly restrain dangerous recidivists. The critics note, further, that the bathtubs are so loosely installed that it would be child's play to rip them off the floor and throw them out the window. The critics, of course, conveniently overlook the fact that it is impossible to open any of the windows, or that the sheets, thin as they are, cannot be fashioned into a usable rope, or that the hangers are bolted to the closets so they cannot be removed and fashioned into weapons, or that the pieces of soap are so small they could not possibly be carved into mock pistols. Withal, there is the ultimate security. After all, anyone who has ever tried to check out of one of these places in order to catch an airplane can testify that it is well-nigh impossible to leave the place, or even to find one's rented car in the garage.

Will any of this work?

It's hard to tell, but, so far as prisons are concerned, the movement toward condominium ownership has already led to a boom in the remodeling of older institutions. Predictably, a better class of people has started to move in. Some refer to the phenomenon as "gentrification," and, surely, the rising proportion of typical middle-class inmates in the prison population is an irrefutable statistic.

Life, after all, is filled with ironies, and it may well turn out that incarceration is the most effective way of getting the government off one's back. □

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DEBACLE: THE AMERICAN FAILURE IN IRAN

Michael Ledeen and William Lewis
Knopf / $14.95

Philip Terzian

Now and again, American foreign policy has wandered from the ideal to the real—from the spirit to the flesh—in a loose translation of values from high-church rhetoric to low, prosaic drama. All the State Department's a stage, and the potentates merely players.

But who, among the fallen caliphs and chancellors of our time, offered so sad, and so edifying, a spectacle as the late Shah of Iran—the fugitive, cancer-ridden Light of the Aryans, cast out from his homeland, forsaken by his patron the United States, clinging for some form of life to Jimmy Carter, succored and then betrayed by the late General Torrijos, pursued unto death by Hamilton Jordan? None, surely, and if we are lucky, none will compare in the foreseeable future. American foreign policy—at least by 1979—was bound to fall apart by the sheer weight of its diffusion, and it fell to Mohammed Reza Pahlavi to be caught underneath the carcass. Seldom has it been possible to see the failure of policy rendered into human terms, or so vividly. But there is the Shah; or, there he was.

Whether foreign policy will reassemble itself in any plausible fashion remains to be seen. Under the circumstances, and as the world proceeds to grapple with the Islamic Republic, we can only hope. *Debacle* is the first rendition of the fall of Iran, and a lucid post-mortem of the calamity. It ought to be read and pondered, surely; for in spite of the speed with which it was produced—astonishing in retrospect—it offers a persuasive, sobering account of how foreign policy is made, or unmade, and executed. And whether it is a jaundice-eyed view of the Carter machinery, or a wholesale indictment of business-as-usual, it is disquieting reading.

Here we see an administration with misplaced ideals and no ideas, high-ranking officials of appalling ignorance, hypocrisy abounding where steadiness should reign, setbacks answered by panic. We can read of the blindness of eyewitnesses, sometimes willful and sometimes not. We can see neophytes with lives in their hands. Worst of all, we can watch decades of carefully nurtured policy crumble under the weight of a huge incompetence. We can see, indeed, the final bill for Vietnam. A decade of atonement and self-hatred found itself fogging the windows in the State Department and the White House. The past caught up with the present; the shadow of Lyndon Johnson hung heavily on Jimmy Carter and his minions, and the nation was paralyzed.

Of course, we will be debating the decline and fall of the Pahlavi regime and the imprisonment of American diplomats for years to come, and of course the cables and memoranda will come to light in pieces and memoirs. It is a large jigsaw puzzle, and it will not be easily put together. Indeed, it may not be possible to do so, for in any understanding of history, the motives and reasons turn on such quirks and failings as cannot be reconstructed by any detective, no matter how skilled or blessed with documents. Common sense demands that one clue lead to another; logic propels the scholar down a well-worn path. Like the reconstruction of a battle, the historian is armed with maps and dispatches, while the general is armed with guns. The historian's evidence belies the general's behavior. And we ask, Who was right? He had the guns; why didn't he fire them? What would the historian have done? But so much for the logical and the sensible.

In Iran, America lost its head, heart, and most of its vital organs. Things happened which it did not comprehend; once a course of events unfolded, we were caught unawares, and once events overtook policy, a kind of atavistic principle came into play. Leaders became followers, analysts pursued mirages. The smell of defeat was persistently in the air. The voices of reason, or so they were called, and the voices of experience, or so they were thought, were cacophonous. In the councils of state, they were not merely unreasonable, but—a far greater diplomatic sin—they were unrealistic. The White House waited on events, preferring to react rather than dominate, to wiggle through small openings rather than anticipate advantages. That was the code of the Carter administration—and it was all very well in its way—but it could lead to nothing but disaster.

Finally, who or what can explain what happened? The maestro, Jimmy Carter, never knew what hit him. At first he used the hostage crisis to his political advantage, and then—licking his wounds after November 1980—understood that it had in fact defeated him for re-election. The point of *Debacle* is that one element led to another. If it had not been Iran, it would have been somewhere else, and the hostage crisis was not an isolated event but a culmination of events. And, taking that one step further, if we have not learned something from the triumph of the Ayatollah, it is probably time that we did.

A piece of autobiography: In the autumn of 1978, I found myself sitting on the seventh floor of the Department of State, a decidedly insignificant member of the Policy Planning Staff, cranking out statements and orations for the then secretary, the Hon. Cyrus Vance. Mr. Vance was ultimately to resign in protest over the one decisive act of the Carter administration in Iran. And he was, of course, loudly applauded for this, and with good reason: a) The rescue mission failed, and his angry departure made it look as though he had backed a better plan, when in fact he had opposed any plan at all; and b) the right-thinking people have not had a proper resignation in protest since William Jennings Bryan, and any such leave-taking—even one so cowardly as Vance's—was bound to satisfy them. Added to this was Carter's petulant, not to say characteristic, reaction, which put the final gloss on the affair.

But that's another story. At this juncture, it was beginning to dawn upon the minds in residence at the State Department that the Shah might not survive the insurgency.

Philip Terzian is Associate Editor of the Lexington [*Kentucky*] Herald.

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The Policy Planning Staff, called upon presumably to plan policy, was still projecting "an island of stability" astride the Persian Gulf, but governed by a new—perhaps slightly different, certainly more palatable—regime. The Ayatollah Khomeini, after all, was a "kind of saint," according to our Ambassador to the United Nations, and I well remember the speculation that bounced back and forth across the conference table about the holy man in his Parisian exile. The Shi'ite Muslims were a devout sect, leaning toward asceticism, rather like our own Benedictines; one religious leader (Carter) ought to have something in common with another (Khomeini). The Ayatollah was fundamentally a Western-oriented man, virulently anti-Communist, probably possessed of some social democratic notions about banking and land reform—withal a kind of François Mitterrand with beard and turban. "We can live with Khomeini" was the dominant theme. It was never clear to me whether the wish was father to the hope, or whether the prospect was taken seriously. In any case, it was the gist of informed opinion on the seventh floor of the State Department. It certainly reflected the administration's determination *not* to live with the Shah, who was about to slide into oblivion, or Shahpour Bakhtiar, who really did fit the Department's crazed impression of Khomeini.

The curious point about all this is that the speculation was the purest fantasy—as we were soon to discover—and was being bruited about in the one place that should have known better, and indeed had every opportunity to find out. The obvious was situated in obvious places. A co-author of *Debacle*, Michael Ledeen, had arranged to have some of Khomeini's anti-Semitic fulminations published in the *Wall Street Journal*, and like a Cassandra of the Xerox machine, I reproduced the evidence and sent it around with a polite memorandum. It was greeted with silence. Perhaps I am flattering myself to suppose that this was any sort of reaction; the likelihoood is that this hapless warning about Khomeini, as with so many others, was politely filed and forgotten.

How could this have happened? The authors of *Debacle* place a considerable amount of blame on the reactive policies of the Carter administration. In this I suspect there is considerable truth, although I am not certain the culprits can be so easily identified. Patricia Derian, assistant secretary of state for human rights, is a convenient target, and has much to commend her as a prime specimen of the ungifted amateurs who afflicted American foreign policy in those days. A self-confessed simpleton who had never thought much about public affairs until the assassination of Robert Kennedy, Mrs. Derian was catapulted from Mississippi Democratic politics into a diplomatic position of acute sensitivity and unquestioned ambiguity. She proceeded—like her colleague Ambassador Young—to apply the laws of left-wing Democratic politics to the world of foreign affairs. This would not have been so bad had she been allowed to flounder harmlessly in the corridors of National Public Radio, or some such appropriate outlet. The fact is that she wielded considerable power, and power that was granted to her by the president himself. It was her contention that human rights, not the national interest, should govern foreign policy, and with that in mind she evaluated the globe as she inherited it in January 1977. From this premise, the Iranian revolution was easy to invite, healthy to promote, and cause to celebrate. In the beginning—so the administration reasoned—"the Shah was the prob-

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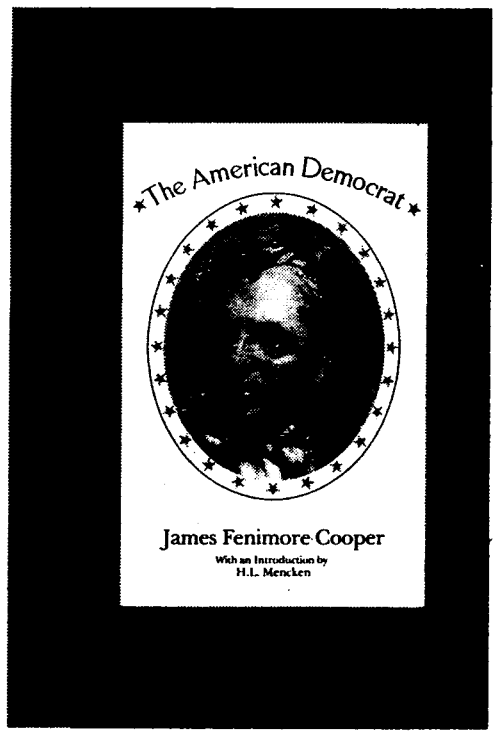

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lem," and so the Shah was sacrificed. A quarter-century of American policy flew into exile with him. The right-thinking people, who had rightly deplored SAVAK and had long yearned to undo the handiwork of the CIA of the early 1950s, were finally vindicated.

Debacle presents two frightening spectacles. The first is the evidence that the Carter administration should have so freely dismantled the structure of postwar American policy. It was populated, after all, by those whose political careers had either foundered upon Vietnam—and who had learned an invaluable lesson—or whose careers had been made by Vietnam and its wake. One of the pleasures of the Reagan administration is to observe the restoration of something like a sense of national purpose in foreign policy, rather than a misplaced idealism, or a policy based upon the antithesis of a national interest. The Carter diplomats were determined to rearrange the stresses and strains of the global order, as though such things could be done by proclamation, or by dispatching Rosalynn to lecture juntas. It is mistaken to suppose that Patricia Derian was Carter's Svengali; she was merely his creature, one of many, but one whose portfolio neatly coincided with the basic error of our policy toward Iran. The Shah was held to standards that were incomprehensible to him; the United States briefly imagined that the Iranians behaved like Democrats in caucus, and would follow rules of procedure designed for a democracy on the run. Naturally, the Iranians behaved like Iranians, and in the end were incomprehensible to the Carter administration. If it were not for the tragic repercussions—the tremors of which we feel today, and will suffer for some time—it would be a delicious turn of events.

The other prospect *Debacle* offers is the confusion of the diplomatic bureaucracy. One wonders whether the damage can be undone, or whether the gathering clouds obscure the long view. For too long now, policy has been a reaction to Vietnam. The State Department does not plan the future or chart a course. It largely concerns itself with avoiding "another Vietnam," or reacting, in its uncertain way, to the various crises as they come along. The United States, to paraphrase Dean Acheson, seems to have lost an empire and failed to find a role. Perhaps the process has been so accelerated that we have failed to comprehend it. Indeed, we are not just reacting to Vietnam but reacting in general. Whether this can be ascribed to a loss of will, or a loss of a compass, is impossible to say. The authors quote Walter Lippmann at the end of the book to the effect that the democracies lack the clarity of mind and resolution of purpose "to cope with the accumulating disasters and disorders." The problem, of course, is that Lippmann's complaint dates from the Golden Age of American Purpose, at least by comparison.

Perhaps the matter is relatively simple. In Iran, the United States suffered from ignorance almost from the beginning. It sponsored the Shah at a critical moment, and as he survived and prevailed, it began to believe its own propaganda. In the end, the Light of the Aryans was revealed to be weak-willed, fearful, and vacillating. His panic and dissembling were matched only by Jimmy Carter's: Both expected the other to invoke the storm of steel, and ultimately no one invoked anything. The lesson here, obviously, is that American client states are only as dependable and vital as their sponsor. Once the prop is taken away, the stage is apt to fall. So long as the

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United States undertakes leadership, it invites responsibility. So long as the leadership is uncertain, the responsibility is abrogated. The climax of uncertainty came on November 4, 1979, at which point the weakened spirit of American policy was embodied in the flesh held hostage.

For the United States and the Iranian revolution, the hostage crisis was the end of the drama. For foreign policy, let us hope, it was the recognition of failure, and the beginning of reconstruction. □

BRITISH MILITARY POLICY
BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS
Brian Bond / Oxford / $48.00

BRITANNIA AT BAY: THE DEFENSE OF
THE BRITISH EMPIRE AGAINST JAPAN 1931-1941
Paul Haggie / Oxford / $49.50

Eliot Cohen

There are at least two good reasons to embark upon a study of Britain's defense policy between the World Wars: sheer curiosity about why World War II began as it did, and a desire to learn from the British experience. Although I would not slight the former motivation, there is a great deal to be said for the latter, for the United States has succeeded Great Britain as the only liberal-democratic world power. Like Britain in its age of imperial pre-eminence it must defend global interests while maintaining a conventional balance on the European continent; although primarily a great naval and aeronautic power it too must possess a land force capable of fighting enemies as different as Arab guerrillas and Soviet tank armies. As did Britain, the United States finds itself the nominal leader of a vast alliance whose members (for example, Australia during the 1930s; Japan today) demand protection but resist its pleas for military contributions—and whom it would be both wrong and unwise to abandon.

Of course, the analogy is suggestive but by no means exact. In economic terms alone we are relatively (let alone absolutely) far larger and healthier than Britain was fifty years ago; for good or ill NATO is hardly the Empire; the threat posed by the Soviet Union is in many ways less severe than that posed by Germany, Japan, and Italy. The point, simply, is that there are lessons to be drawn from a thoughtful study of how a great Empire exposed itself to defeat and dissolution.

Eliot Cohen is a teaching fellow in the Department of Government of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University.

To this end Brian Bond's *British Military Policy Between the Two World Wars* and Paul Haggie's *Britannia at Bay* are valuable studies, though not equally so. Both authors write well and display considerable scholarship, but Bond is clearly the superior historian. His book is both excellent in its own right and definitive in relation to the subject. Unlike Haggie, Bond often steps back and gives his reader a sense of the larger political and military context of his topic. He presents his thesis forthrightly: "The most important cause of the Army's unpreparedness at the start of the Second World War lay in protracted political and military indecision over its role." Haggie, by contrast, does not really tell us to what extent penury, stinginess, political delusions, lack of a clearcut naval doctrine, or the need to appease both Japan and the United States simultaneously were responsible for Britain's fatal weakness in the East in December 1941—though, of course, he would say they all were. Nonetheless, the books are complementary, for if Bond concentrates on Britain's failure to create an effective army for Europe, Haggie explains some of the competing demands on Britain's defense resources.

Both men go far to defend the British armed forces against charges of Blimpery. Bond succeeds particularly well in explaining why the Army did not create heavy armored divisions during the 1930s, even though the pioneers of armored warfare during the 1920s had been Englishmen (Fuller, Hobart, Martel, and others). The Army could not get the resources to mechanize primarily because politicians were unwilling to contemplate a serious military commitment to France and Belgium. Ironically, as Bond points out, those who criticized the Army most sharply for its failure to mechanize—Liddell Hart above all—were the same ones who advocated a policy of little or no continental commitment, and thereby obviated the need for an armored striking force. Bond concedes the stifling effect of certain promotion policies and the mores of the British officer corps, but he observes that British military doctrine in the colonies was often highly progressive, as on the Northwest Frontier in 1936 or earlier in Iraq, where light mobile forces worked in tandem with aircraft to smother sizable guerrilla forces. He also points out that the British Army was the only completely motorized army in 1940—the Germans, French, and Russians all relied on horses for the bulk of their transport.

Anglo-Saxon politicians and intellectuals tend to believe that their professional soldiers are obscurantists, if not fools, while at the same time they themselves shun a serious study of military affairs. As a result, these groups often turn to military mavericks who advocate either a particular service or weapons technology to the exclusion of all others. And so, politicians can believe they have contrived a cheap solution to defense problems, while intellectuals acquire a set of villains to pillory and martyrs to eulogize. Both groups deceive themselves in their belief that the exotic or cheap solution is based on sound military advice, for their skepticism about the wisdom of most military men does not extend to their chosen prophets. Thus arose the immense and pernicious popularity of the Royal Air Force in the interwar period and the inflated reputation of the tank theorists (especially Fuller and Liddell Hart) after World War II. Thus too arise the arguments advanced today by politicians such as Gary Hart and writers such as James Fallows for a cheaper but better defense.

The fact is that for every weapons system there is a counter—fighters and anti-aircraft guns can shoot down bombers, special artillery (today, missiles) can puncture tank hulls, and so forth. Military technology progresses by a constant dialectic between measure and countermeasure—hence it is quite as foolish today to suggest that guided antitank missiles have made the tank obsolete as it was fifty years ago to think it invincible. On the land, wars are usually won by skill at combined arms operations, by full use of what Field Marshal Slim called the orchestra of war. This is also true in a larger sense. A world power requires air, naval, and land forces capable of the

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most intimate cooperation. With such integrated forces one can produce triumphs like the liberation of France in 1944; without them one has disasters like Gallipoli in 1915. Without naval protection armies cannot be transported and sustained; without armies an enemy cannot be overthrown; without airpower neither ships nor soldiers can engage their foes on anything like equal terms.

British civilian leaders between the wars failed both to force service disputes out into the open and to resolve them. As Haggie makes clear, the squabbling and lack of cooperation among the Army, Navy, and Air Force left Singapore as vulnerable as a crab out of its shell. Politicians deceived themselves and others by calling the island base—which was the fulcrum of Britain's strategic position in the East—a "fortress" when it was nothing of the kind.

British political leaders did not accept the necessity of fulfilling the military consequences of their foreign policy by creating an armored force capable of intervention on the continent. In a myopic (and as Bond maintains, unnecessary) pursuit of economy, Britain allowed her armaments industries to wither. Her Navy, restricted in both size and type of ship by the naval arms control agreements of the interwar years, was too small and in some instances (particularly in the case of cruisers and battleships) undersized and underarmored. When rearmament began in earnest during the late 1930s, all kinds of supply bottlenecks impeded Britain's return to military strength. As we are now learning, crash building programs are no substitute for a defense industry operating at a fairly constant level.

Historians are interested, above all, in why things happened as they did, and hence these two authors convey to the reader a sense that the Empire was doomed before its foreign enemies. The student of war and strategy, however, if he is to learn from historical study, must ask how men might have shaped events differently. To his credit, Bond goes to considerable lengths to demonstrate that Britain could have afforded and ought to have deployed a continental striking force of several armored divisions during the 1930s. Not only might this force have tipped the balance during the Battle of France (which was less pre-determined than many suppose); its mere existence might have forestalled Belgium's foolhardy retreat to neutralism in 1936 and encouraged a more aggressive attitude in France in 1938.

On the other hand, it is well to consider the intractable difficulties of Britain's position. The British Army was designed primarily to garrison the Empire and fight colonial wars: The Cardwell system kept each regiment at a strength of two battalions, one overseas and one at home, and endowed each regiment with a peculiar tradition and ethos. This arrangement was vital to the morale and efficiency, of long-service volunteer soldiers who spent much of their time overseas. It also, however, complicated mechanization in a variety of administrative and psychological ways—as demonstrated by the controversy over whether tank battalions should belong to a separate giant regiment or come from modernized cavalry. Furthermore, an Army trained to fight colonial war had neither the equipment nor the training to fight continental war. The American problem today is precisely the reverse but no less acute: We possess an Army of short service volunteers (and in the past and probably in the future, draftees) trained and equipped for high intensity European war but unsuited for grueling counterguerrilla or small war.

The Royal Navy could not hope to defeat German submarines and heavy commerce raiders, the Italian and the Japanese main battlefleets all at once—on what threat should it have concentrated? The Royal Air Force had to choose among such different missions as the defense of Great Britain, close air support for the Army, cooperation with the Navy, and an independent strategic bombing role, as well as between overseas and home commitments. Today, the United States faces a similar if lesser difficulty in its choice of a strategic bomber—should it buy an aircraft designed only to launch nuclear strikes against the USSR, or a terribly costly but multi-purpose conventional bomber?

The most sobering reflection that these books engender is this: Despite its undoubted strength and will, this country, like any other, has limited

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spiritual and material resources, and more threats to its security than means to cope with them. No matter how salutary the defense policies of the Reagan administration are, they can help only in small measure unless they are backed not only by closely reasoned analysis of our predicament, doctrines, and military institutions, but by the will to act on the basis of such study. At best, history only hints at the solutions statesmen and soldiers may find: It reveals all too clearly, however, the consequences should they fail to do so. □

THE PHILOSOPHER IN THE CITY:
THE MORAL DIMENSIONS OF URBAN POLITICS
Hadley Arkes / Princeton University Press / $27.50, $6.95 paper

Edward C. Banfield

This book is an effort to show how principles of morality may be applied to certain problems of the American city. Unfortunately, it is far from successful. In my judgment the author, a professor of political science at Amherst College, is profoundly wrong about the nature of politics, law, and moral truth. His book is painfully tedious. In part this is because he writes at length on matters which have little to do with his subject. In part it is because he is verbose and altogether lacking in clarity.

First, the matter of style. From first to last the book is written in pretentious gibberish. I am aware that many people think this is the way academic books should be written. But Mr. Arkes carries the thing too far. Consider—what I believe is a fair example—the following on prostitution: "[T]here is nothing precisely equal to the intimacy of the sexual act and the moral portents that envelop it." This has a magisterial sound, but what exactly does it mean? Does it make sense to say that an act is "equal" (let alone "precisely") to another in intimacy? What are "moral portents"? I suppose they are signs of moral things to come, but what things can these be? Whatever portents are, can they "envelop" sexual, or for that matter other, acts? Does the word "and" in the quoted sentence connect "portents" with "act" or with "intimacy"? Perhaps the sentence says that the portents are intimate. If not, it must say that no act equals in intimacy the sex act plus its moral portents.

Matters are not clarified on the next page. "Prostitution inescapably implies that the intimacy of sexual intercourse need not be connected to any authentic sentiment of love . . ." Let us pass over the question of the force of the words "inescapably" (are some implications escapable?), "authentic" (are some sentiments inauthentic?), and "sentiment" (is some love not a sentiment?). The proposition is that prostitution implies that there may be intimacy without love. (Surely it does more than *imply* it.) Are we to assume that *this* intimacy, i.e., without love, is also enveloped in moral portents? And that it too is not precisely equalled by any other act?

Sexual intercourse ". . . with another person would be unthinkable unless one were motivated by the deepest personal love." We pass over the question of the force of the words "another person" and "personal" as well as the factual error (when he was running for President, Jimmy Carter said that such a thing is thinkable) to get to the next sentence: "But to say that two people are bound together in love is to say that they are connected by a more than casual attraction." If this means that love is not a chance occurrence, it is another factual error. But that cannot be what it means. The next sentence says: "And that connection [what connection?] finds its proper ground when it proceeds from an understanding of those things which makes one's partner truly worthy of being loved." This must mean that love is not love except as: a) the loved one is worthy (let us pass over the "truly") of being loved, and b) the lover understands the worthiness of the loved one (let us pass over "of those things which make"). What makes one "worthy" of being loved?

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What is it to "understand" the things that make one worthy?

The pretentiousness of such writing is merely ridiculous. But its confusion is a serious matter. It puts a burden on the reader. One thinks something important may be hidden away in the verbiage, and so one must constantly ask oneself: Is it possible to make sense of this?

If Mr. Arkes had saved all those unneeded words for another occasion and had said what he means straight out, his book would still be tedious. Chapter by chapter he rakes over the details of stuff from the history of constitutional law and now-forgotten controversies about the views of Jonathan Kozol, Kenneth Clark, Floyd Hunter, and others. The rehashes are especially irksome because they have little or nothing to do with the argument of the book.

One of the main contentions of that argument is that the consequences of a policy, as described by social scientists or others, are irrelevant ("largely irrelevant," Mr. Arkes would say); it is the great error of our time to have been misled by utilitarianism and positivism into thinking that consequences matter. The wrong of prostitution, for example, "cannot be found in any contingent reckonings about venereal disease, the stimulation of crime, or the break-up of families." It must "be found in principle—in a principle, we might say, that begins with the awareness of principle itself and of beings that alone have access to the understanding of principle." Although Mr. Arkes does not say so in so many words, he must think that prostitution would be no less wrong even if it were a sure cure for venereal disease, crime, the break-up of families, and all other social ills.

Moral truths, he tells us, are as knowable and as certain as mathematical truths. "They may be drawn as inferences from the nature of that creature which can grasp, in the first place, the idea of morals, and which has the freedom, therefore, to choose between right and wrong." They are true "of necessity." Politics, properly understood, is the activity of drawing these moral inferences from the nature of man. Except as a principle implicit in the nature of man which declares an act to be wrong "of necessity," law has no business interfering with it, no matter what may be its consequences for a public. By the same token, an act that is wrong "of necessity" ("categorically") ought to be forbidden by law however benign its consequences. For clarification of these claims, the author is content to refer the reader to Kant.

Moral principles turn out to be a good deal less knowable and certain than Mr. Arkes began by saying. Racial discrimination, slavery, prostitution, abortion, and pornography are all morally wrong (that Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas would have disagreed with each other and with Mr. Arkes on some of these matters is worth noting, although Mr. Arkes does not note it); gambling, drinking, and some zoning (e.g., against fast-food places on highways) are not wrong in principle. Persons accustomed to dealing with mathematical truths will be perplexed at the equivocal status of some moral ones: prostitution, for example. Mr. Arkes says that he thinks the argument against it "finally holds" but he grants that it is "tangled and complicated." He begins the next sentence: "If I am wrong . . ." Then he "estimates" that "our perfected moral judgement will finally support even more strongly our traditional reluctance to regard prostitution as a legitimate occupation on the same plane of respectability as nursing, carpentry, or tailoring." (This is gibberish for I conjecture that prostitu-

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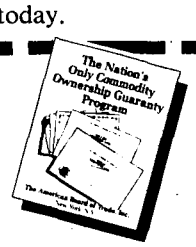

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tion will continue to be disreputable.) If to establish the truth of moral principles it is necessary to depend upon the perfection of "our" moral judgment, they are not as knowable and as certain as mathematical ones.

This brings me to my main complaint. Mr. Arkes does not recognize the difference between philosophy and politics. "In the last analysis," he writes, "it may indeed be only the philosopher who is capable of addressing, at their root, the practical questions of public policy that arise in the city." He fails to see (perhaps his vision is blocked by his metaphor) that the "root" of a practical question is fundamentally different from the question itself. One cannot address a practical question at its "root"; the question is practical precisely because there is no principle by which it may be coped with, let alone solved.

Mr. Arkes is aware that this is an imperfect world and therefore moral principles may often be inexpedient to apply. Statesmen, he tells us, have "an obligation to be prudent and reasonable." "[I]f one puts new precepts into men who are imperfect containers, the precepts themselves may come to be despised, and those men may erupt into evils that are worse yet." These words are at the very end of the book. If the author had begun with an extended consideration of these imperfections he would have been led to acknowledge that a politician (the word "statesman" is an attempted evasion of the issue) must act generally in an unprincipled or even wrong way if he is to perform his indispensable function of finding the terms on which we can live together in society. □

THE RAT ON FIRE

George V. Higgins / Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. / $10.95

Michael C. Brown

If there is anything more predictable than a *New Yorker* short story perhaps it is a George Higgins novel. Old *New Yorker*-story hands sigh deeply as they remove the brown postal slip-cover, dreamily flip past the cud-chewings of "Talk of the Town," chuckle once or twice at a Koren or a Hamilton cartoon, and then nestle a bit deeper into the old armchair as they reach what they already know to be another fusty bit of fiction with which to while away 25 or 30 minutes. And yet, after finishing a new tale of a mother and her son in some nameless middle European country, or some mock-heroic peek at the dissolution of an affair, or whatever, by God if our old hand doesn't invariably mutter, "Fine writing . . . brilliant editing . . . slice of life," and then putter off to tie a fly or re-pot a geranium.

At the risk of straining a somewhat autobiographical analogy, may I say: Even so with Higgins.

Every Higgins fan knows the numbing feeling that sets in upon first opening a new opus and realizing that once again we are to be on the receiving end of nothing but conversational dialogue between low-life hoods or their moral counterparts in law enforcement. And yet compulsively we read on and, like our friend over at the *New Yorker,* find ourselves sitting straight up at the end of *The Rat on Fire* applauding and anticipating the encore.

A look at the Higgins method is instructive.

George Higgins will never write a comedy of manners. He will also probably never write a book set on a boat nor a book full of historical sweep. What he will continue to do is constantly to surprise the common reader with his ability to fix in time and place a small section of mankind, the Boston world of the habitual petty criminal. Higgins manages this almost solely by having his various low-life lawyers, cops, and three-time losers talk to each other. All the time.

The sheer periphrastic quality of the dialogue in a Higgins novel, that life-like quality of most everyday speech that renders it so maddeningly dull, ought to doom his books from the start. Instead, paragraphs such as the following are Higgins's stock in trade:

"Billy," Leo said, "I'm not a banker. I do live inna real world. I'm not a bad carpenter. I can lay brick, if there's nobody from the union standin' around. I can do the pipe work. I dunno how many furnaces and burners I took out and put in. I can install your hot-water heater. I can refit your f-----' waste disposal. You give me enough furring and wallboard, and let me into your place in the morning, I will have the joint rebuilt before you can get through the traffic that night and there will be no plaster dust lying around all over the place. I can insulate your attic and I can make your cellar stop leaking, sometimes. I can glaze your windows where the vandals broke 'em and I can point your exterior bricks if I have to. Roofing's something I learned about thirty years ago. I can put in dishwashers and change your locks and fix your garage-door opener. Custom bookcases and platform beds, bathroom vanities and molded showers, parquet floors and new bay windows: I do all of them things, and I never once had one complaint that was legitimate. You want gold-plated faucets that look like swans? I can put those in. A little orange stove that's shaped like an ice-cream cone? No sweat. Rewire the upstairs, put in an intercom, put a humidifier on the furnace, put in your sump pump—I done all those things.

"The trouble is," Leo said, "doing all them things hasn't done me enough good as far's money's concerned, and as a result I am in a lot of trouble with a lot of bankers who don't seem interested in my explanations.

"Now," he said, "I was satisfied with that, and I don't really see why I thought I hadda go out and get myself in trouble with the cops too. I didn't need any cops chasing me around. I had enough on my plate as it was. But once they started, all of a sudden I needed a lawyer.

"Of course I can't *get* no lawyer. None to speak of, anyway. But I can get Fein, and Fein has got the thing there that says he is a lawyer, even though the idea of Jerry Fein in court is something that'd gag a billy goat that had to go to court. But Jerry Fein has to do what I say."

"What you ought to say," Billy said, "you ought to say, 'Get me somebody else.'"

Within the awkward realism of those lines lies the secret of Higgins's success. I have absolutely no idea whether small time Roxbury hoods like Leo Proctor and cops on the take like Billy Malatesta speak to each other in this manner. But there is enough of the aura of Jimmy Cagney and the Queens, N.Y. of Jimmy Breslin and hard-boiled types like Lew Archer and Philip Marlowe to convince the reader that Higgins is not drawing stick figures. Although Higgins probably knows the territory as well, he most certainly knows the literature in the field of crime.

In every novel Higgins pushes the language of dialogue to its limits. His most outrageous device in *The Rat on Fire* is a literary trick used strategic-

Michael C. Brown, formerly with the San Francisco Chronicle, *is editor of* View, *the University of San Francisco alumni magazine.*

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ally through the book in which two separate conversations run simultaneously in the same pages. It is a highly successful moment for Higgins when it clicks to the reader that one set of voices is eavesdropping on the other set as all four men chatter away. This is a gimmick, a realistic device to trick us into believing that *we* are eavesdropping on the whole motley crew of thugs, arsonists, and cops in the novel, and, as a matter of fact, it works.

The world of crime is a simple place in Higgins's books. Very ordinary men, usually not terribly bright, are trapped in a life of fat, demanding wives, suffocating debt brought on by their predatory children, business failures caused by a deceiving world, or, in the case of Leo Proctor in *The Rat on Fire,* a drunken drive into a pond off of the Massachusetts Turnpike which occasions his need of Fein the lawyer. Leo has obviously always hovered around the edges of crime, but Fein suggests as payment for his court costs a simple little torch job on a tenement building that Fein owns where the residents sell for scrap such things as the hot water pipes. Leo has some knowledge in the matter of arson and the novel is on its way.

Within Higgins's world of crime there is always a high degree of bumbling incompetence. This incompetence, combined with the mundane circumstances that usually seem to lead to crime, draws us head-on to the central problem I have with all the books, from *The Friends of Eddie Coyle* to *The Rat on Fire.* It is all too easy to feel sorry for the likes of Eddie Coyle and Leo Proctor. The common reader feels manipulated and Higgins, who has practiced law for many years in and around the environs of such characters and has undoubtedly felt such emotions as well, knows this. But he does struggle with a form of justice in many of his books and this usually gives a final stabilizing feeling.

There are two versions present in the latest novel of the sort of ethic that controls this untidy world: When a petty criminal oversteps his competence in an attempt to move up in the world of crime, he is slapped down by circumstance. When small-time Leo Proctor strikes the deal with Jerry Fein, whereby Proctor will arrange for Fein's rat-infested tenement to go up in flames, the gods that control such matters in Massachusetts begin arranging for the fall of Leo Proctor.

The second element of this cockeyed ethos underscores this equation: Higgins leads us to believe that the bad guys will always be bad, but when occasionally the cops are bad the simple nature of the criminal act is muddied. When Billy Malatesta, the crooked fire marshal, looks the other way during the arson investigation, Leo Proctor's crime is subsumed into a lesser class. A sort of subterranean situational ethics takes hold for Higgins. Leo's fall is postponed for another caper and the cop takes his punishment. Order is returned to this society. Not terribly satisfying for us to believe, but we *must* believe such an expert witness as George Higgins.

Whether in his fine newspaper column in the *Boston Globe* or in the pages of his novels, Higgins impresses with his competency to distill his corner of the world into an entertaining form. Somewhere between a regional writer and a wholly versatile novelist, George Higgins at the moment is at the peak of popular fiction. □

THE MX ICBM AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Colin S. Gray / Praeger Publishers / $22.95

Terry O'Rourke

As the seemingly interminable debate over the MX missile system continues, Colin S. Gray of the Hudson Institute has contributed an acute and cogent analysis of the case for the MX missile. Unlike many studies of the MX—both pro and con—Gray's work reflects a coherent appreciation of the wide range of strategic issues that will affect national security in the years ahead. Gray's primary concerns are the need for: 1) a survivable land-based missile force; 2) nuclear war-fighting and damage-limiting capabilities; and 3) authentic strategic stability imposed by strengthened U.S. strategic forces which would make it impossible for the Soviets "to devise plausible-looking plans for victory in a central nuclear war."

The starting point of any discussion of the MX missile is the almost total vulnerability of the U.S. silo-housed Minuteman missile force to a Soviet first strike; as a result of increasing Soviet warhead accuracy, virtually no one disputes that the threat to the Minuteman system is real and imminent. The MX missile-multiple protective structures (MX/MPS) system has been proposed as a solution to the problem of land-based missile vulnerability. Gray's analysis focuses on the final Carter administration system design (as inherited by the Reagan administration), providing for 200 missiles housed deceptively among 4600 shelters in such a manner as to permit a fairly rapid shuffle of the system as a whole during times of heightened tension. Each MX missile is designed to carry ten highly accurate warheads, as opposed to the three warheads of the Minuteman III missile.

Gray believes that the MX/MPS system design inherited by the Reagan administration is operationally sound. Further, he believes that if the United States is determined to compete effectively, the proposed system can be augmented to meet any expanded threat that may arise from increased numbers of Soviet warheads. Such adaptations would include "backfilling" the system to 9200 (or more) shelters, deployment of the LoADS ballistic missile defense system, and, after 1990, deployment of an exo-atmospheric ballistic missile defense system.

Obviously, the MX/MPS system, including any necessary future expansions and defenses, will bear a heavy cost, both in dollars and long-term political commitment. For a number of strategic reasons—applicable to any variant of a survivable, operationally sound, and expandable land-based MX/MPS system that may ultimately be adopted—Gray believes that it is worth the price. Tracing the course of recent shifts in the strategic balance, Gray notes that the "United States lost (or more accurately surrendered) strategic superiority at the end of the 1960s, embraced the concept of parity—variously and vaguely expressed as 'sufficiency,' 'realistic deterrence,' 'essential equivalence'—as the guiding light of the 1970s, and now, at the beginning of the 1980s, has already entered a period that could, optimistically, be described as one of tolerable (?) inferiority." Echoing the concerns of a penitent Henry Kissinger (speaking in 1979), Gray agrees that the vulnerability of the Minuteman force to Soviet attack is of greater consequence to the United States

(*continued on page 41*)

Terry O'Rourke practices law in Southern California.

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CURRENT WISDOM

The New York Times

Beyond Marx, beyond Freud, even beyond Alvin Toffler, the esteemed Mrs. T. Thevenin takes mankind into the dawn of a new and luminous age via the sheets:

The new philosophy advocates letting a child sleep with his parents until he decides to leave the family bed. Parents say that usually a child chooses to sleep in his own room between the ages of 2 and 7, sometimes in the same bed with a brother or sister, but some say that their 13-year-old will sleep with them when undergoing a crisis.

A growing number of parents admit that they allow their babies to sleep with them, said Mrs. Thevenin, a Minneapolis mother of two and author of "The Family Bed—An Age-Old Concept in Child Rearing," which has sold 35,000 copies although privately published and distributed. "People say the book has helped them relax—it's about mothering and trusting your child," said Mrs. Thevenin, who believes that the family bed satisfies the child's basic need for love and produces inner strength and a feeling of security.

[*February 20, 1981*]

The Christian Science Monitor

From an intrepid *CSM* foreign correspondent, still more glad tidings of human benignancy. Ahab is undone:

The encouraging steps at the latest whaling conference are really about something bigger than whales. The whole international effort to agree on saving the whales is one more evidence of human advancement to put against the violence and depredation that hang on in the midst of civilized times. When you stop to think about it, how extraordinary that so many far-flung people should know or care about the lot of creatures remote from them in every way. Yet how natural. It is proving to be a characteristic of humanity to widen its circle of concern from family, friends, neighbors, strangers within the gate—to every living thing.

No millenium has arrived, to be sure, even in the case of the whales with all the latter-day recognition of their mental and physical attributes.

[*July 28, 1981*]

The Village Voice

Midst a cinematic cerebration by the accoladed cinematologist, Dr. Andrew Sarris, some surprising confusion over human biology, suggesting once again the Nation's profound need of sexual education and therapy:

Many people whose opinions I deeply respect have successfully resisted Fassbinder up to now. The wife of a psychiatrist friend once complained to me that *The Marriage of Maria Braun* was the work of a constipated artist. Even though I disagreed with her, I think I understood what she meant. There *is* something blocked up in Fassbinder despite his apparent fecundity.

[*July 8-14, 1981*]

The Nation

Comic Mel Brooks placed in historical and metaphysical perspective by the movie critic of the ever-reliable *Nation:*

Mel Brooks, it must be evident, bores and depresses me; worse, his success frightens me. I cannot avoid bracketing it with the success of Ronald Reagan as evidence that Americans can now be counted on to rally behind anyone who offers them a debased performance expensively staged and aggressively promoted. I am not ready yet to run about the yard proclaiming that the sky is falling but it is a little hard to rejoice in the morale of a country which, having been shown excellence by Jefferson and Buster Keaton, is now dancing attendance on the likes of Reagan and Brooks.

[*June 27, 1981*]

San Francisco Chronicle

An example of significant literary developments not far from the San Andreas fault featured only in the high-toned pages of the illustrious *Chronicle* of San Francisco:

The weather had been relentlessly sunny for almost a week, so Michael and Ned had their hands full at God's Green Earth. Business was so brisk at the nursery that it was 2 o'clock before they sat down amidst the other living things requiring partial shade and contemplated their Yoplait.

"What should I do?" asked Michael.

"About what?"

"The parade."

Ned shrugged. "You're going, aren't you?"

"Sure. But what do I *wear*? I mean, there's a big demand for the All-American look, and I do that pretty well. On the other hand, I'd sorta like to be a nun this year."

Ned spooned yogurt into his mouth. "Go for the nun," he said.

Michael thought for a moment. "Have you ever tried making a date dressed as a nun?"

Ned laughed. "Then be an All-American nun."

"What's that? A Lacoste habit?"

"A Lacoste *under* your habit," said Ned.

"Ah. That way I can swing into action quicker. Like Superman. I like it." Michael smiled at his friend.

"You've got an answer for everything."

Ned smiled back, studying him. "Sister Mary Mouse," he said.

•

They remained there in the dappled light, finishing their lunches in silence.

Then Michael said, "Do you ever get tired of all this?"

"The nursery, you mean?"

"No. Being gay."

Ned smiled. "What do you think?"

"I don't mean being *homosexual*," said Michael. "I wouldn't change that for anything. I love men."

"I've noticed."

"I guess I'm talking about the culture," Michael continued. "The Galleria parties. The T-shirts with the let's-get-it-on slogans. The 14 different shades of jockstraps and those god-damn mirrored sunglasses that toss your own face back at you when you walk into a bar. Phony soldiers and phony policemen and phony jocks. Hot this, hot that. I'm sick of it, Ned. There's gotta be another way to be queer."

Ned grinned, tossing his yogurt cup into the trash. "You could become a lesbian."

[*June 23, 1981*]

The Nation

The idiot teemings of a mind thoroughly enshrouded by the cumulonimbus of Marxian ire—Professor Doktor Philip Green at work:

The election of Ronald Reagan as President of the United States, following the installation of Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister of Britian, confirmed that further advances in the direction of social and political equality are not on the immediate agenda in most advanced capitalist nations today. How can they be in the *sauve-qui-peut* atmosphere of inflation and the productivity crisis afflicting contemporary capitalism? In such a climate, and particularly in a nation with the individualist political traditions and fragmented political institutions of the United States, the idea of collective action for improvement and self-government languishes.

[*April 25, 1981*]

Vegetarian Times

The Kapitalist spirit stalks the pages of the preeminent ideological organ of post-menopause 1960s radicalism:

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[*Issue #48*]

The Star Ledger
(Newark, New Jersey)

The lascivious amusements of an ambitious belletrist sweating mightily in the correspondence section of his hometown gazette:

Dear Editor: I finally succumbed to the adverse publicity and purchased a gypsy moth trap. Suspended from a limb of a pinoak tree, the trap looked like a harmless plastic bird-feeder and its quaint appearance belied, that for the male gypsy moth, it was a house of death.

Inside the trap are two elements. The smaller inch-square strip of paper-like material is impregnated with the sexual scent of the female moth, which incidentally, cannot fly. The larger strip, about three inches long and one-half inch wide, is impregnated with a deadly insecticide which is lethal to the male moth, which, unlike the female, has the ability to fly.

After hanging the trap, I quietly watched to see if this product of man's ingenious scientific and industrial research would work.

About a half-hour passed. Suddenly, there was a fluttering around the trap. A male moth had picked up the female sex-scent and was trying to gain entrance. He fluttered around the top, clawing at the clear plastic. He would back off and then fly headlong into the side. He was frantic! The scent, without a doubt, made that male moth believe that an orgy to end all orgies was occurring inside.

Finally, he found the inconspicuous entrance and into the trap he tumbled. His antennas flicked this way and that way! One could almost hear him yell with suprise; "What the hell is this? Where's the orgy?"

A moment passed. The moth then seemed to realize that he had been tricked, and even worse, he seemed to realize that he was in an environment of certain death. He flapped about hysterically inside the little container, desperately looking for escape. The invisible insecticide insidiously gnawed at his body and he thrashed about looking for the aperture by which he had entered. It became obvious that he was doomed. He had given way to blind panic and he now would never find his way out of the trap. In about seven minutes there was no longer any movement. It was done!

I approached the trap and looked in. Down at the bottom, lifeless, there lay the moth. His antennas were broken his legs were twisted grotesquely and one of his wings was split; alas, he died violently.

I feel somewhat guilty about the death of that gypsy moth. Exactly what was his crime? He never polluted a beach with oil. He never defiled a road with a beer can. He never contaminated a river with chemicals, and he certainly never vandalized a building or desecrated a cemetery. All this little moth did was do what nature designed him to do. First he was a caterpillar, who for a month or two, lived on tree leaves. Then he spun a cocoon from which he emerged as a moth with only one function, to find a female moth and propagate the species . . . but this particular moth never made it. We took the passion with which he was naturally endowed and turned it into his vehicle of destruction.

The moth died because we adjudged he was destructive of our environment.

—*Stephen Moriak*
Jersey City

[*August 1, 1981*]

The Nation

Samuel J. Stoloff, a *Nation* intern also serving the cause of Art as a staff member of "the American Writers Congress," puts to the *Nation*'s credulous audience a chilling question. RUN FOR YOUR LIVES:

Is a purge of leftists teachers under way in the nation's colleges?

[*September 19, 1981*]

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(continued from page 39)

than total vulnerability would be to the Soviet Union, because the United States has always relied, almost exclusively, on superior strategic power to deter the Soviets. A concomitant of this policy has been a relatively low level of American conventional forces. Anticipating an inability to contain a Soviet attack in a vital local theatre—Europe, for example—the United States and its allies have relied upon U.S. strategic superiority to take any potential "conflict to a higher level in quest of an improved outcome." If U.S. strategic forces are inferior, or marginally adequate, it follows that the Unites States' military posture and deterrent strength lack integrity. And this strategic plight cannot be redressed by increasing general-purpose forces alone. Under such circumstances, Gray argues, if the Soviet Union faced conventional military defeat in Europe or in the Persian Gulf region, it "could—and almost certainly would—escalate the conflict in search of an acceptable outcome."

Without a survivable land-based missile force, the "United States will face unprecedented risks of political and military defeat." The coercive potential borne of the Soviets' unilateral counterforce capability is undeniable. It may be true that a United States stripped of its land-based missiles could still reduce much of the Soviet Union to rubble; but most readers would probably agree with Gray that it is also "true that an ICBM-bereft United States should be convincingly self-deterred from ever exercising such an option."

According to Gray, a creditable U.S. deterrent—one which would discourage the Soviets from planning for victory in a nuclear war—requires a survivable, hard-target counterforce capability, which would allow the United States to escalate its way out of a local defeat. Only the MX missile, with the high accuracy and yield of its ten warheads, fulfills this requirement. Although manned bombers and cruise missiles can destroy hard military and political control targets, only the MX missile can rapidly destroy hard military targets before they inflict damage on the United States. In short, only the MX missile offers the combination of survivability, flexibility, accuracy, and promptness of response necessary for the United States to execute a sound war plan.

Gray readily concedes that the MX/MPS system "should be a nightmare to Soviet defense planners." The MX force "should prove untargetable (with profit) and should threaten the survivability of the essential elements of the Soviet state." Although the MX missile alone cannot guarantee U.S. victory, Gray believes that a properly designed system can guarantee Soviet defeat, "a prospect that Soviet General staff planners should find very discouraging." Gray observes that in the Soviet view, deterrent effect flows from anticipated war-fighting capabilities. From this perspective, he argues that a properly designed MX force "should deter a Soviet strategic attack of any kind" and act as an escalation "firebreak."

Gray's rationale for the MX/MPS system flies in the face of the arms control policies that have influenced U.S. strategic programs since the late 1960s. An MX/MPS system, with the ballistic missile defense systems recommended by Gray, should prove to be a nightmare not only to Soviet defense planners, but to substantial elements of the arms control community as well. For one thing, ballistic missile defense of the MX/MPS system would require the United States to withdraw from the 1972 Treaty on Anti-Ballistic Missile

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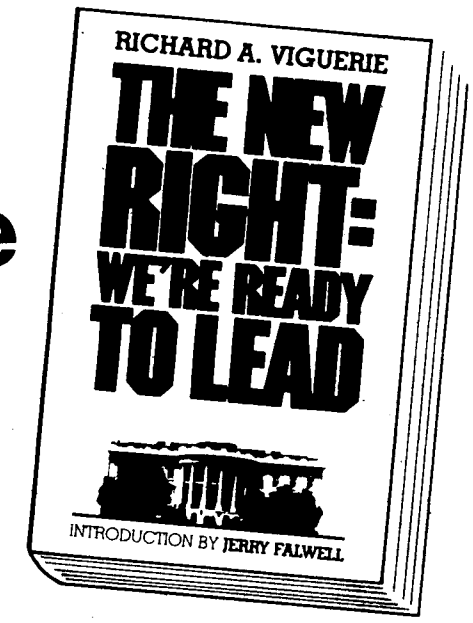

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Systems. But Gray's differences with a major portion of the arms control community are more fundamental than those arising from his endorsement of ballistic missile defense.

In recent years the dominant arms control theory has been one of so-called "mutual stability," which holds that arms race competition is fueled by first strike fears arising from weapons programs designed to destroy at least part of the opponent's capability to wreak massive damage in a second strike. According to Jerome Kahan, in his influential book *Security in the Nuclear Age:*

> [I]n order to establish a mutual stability policy, it is necessary to classify strategic systems as stabilizing or destabilizing and to avoid the latter. . . . Systems and strategies geared to negate an opponent's retaliatory capability and having no direct bearing on the preservation of a dependable deterrent should be rejected as *destabilizing*. This category encompasses offensive weapons programs, such as warhead accuracy and yield improvements, which could provide land or sea-based missiles with the ability to launch counter-force strikes against Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Similar reasoning was used to justify the U.S. Senate's refusal in 1971 to approve funds for improved warhead accuracy.

Clearly, U.S. strategic programs have labored under a persistent contradiction between a policy committed, on the one hand, to "mutual stability," and on the other, to a defense of NATO, which would require responding to a major Soviet conventional attack with disarming nuclear strikes. Such a contradiction could perhaps be endured so long as there were reason to believe that the Soviets also subscribed to a policy of "mutual stability." But the latest generation of Soviet missiles and highly accurate warheads demonstrates that they do not. The knowledge that these Soviet strategic weapons were conceived and designed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the United States was exercising substantial self-restraint in arms competition, must be unsettling for even the most ardent supporter of "mutual stability."

Gray asserts that genuine strategic stability can be established only when U.S. policy makers begin to address Soviet war-fighting and war-winning doctrines, instead of indulging in dangerous "mirror image" assumptions. In evaluating the course of the SALT negotiations since their inception, Gray notes that the Soviet Union has not agreed to any "restraint that would likely have a net negative impact on its war-waging/war winning ability"; rather, the Soviets have cooperated "to the degree they judge useful to inhibit U.S. competitive performance." Under these circumstances, Gray argues that from the U.S. perspective, a properly designed and politically supported MX/MPS system can have only a favorable effect on the SALT process. By making land-based missile survivability bilateral, the MX/MPS system denies the Soviets the planning option of devastating countermilitary nuclear strikes and guarantees "that no unilateral advantage could possibly be secured by straight, unconstrained competition." With deployment of the MX/MPS system, "Moscow would have every incentive to alleviate its strategic planning problems through substantive SALT solutions." In other words, the MX/MPS system reduces the risk of war.

The Soviet threat to the U.S. land-based missile forces poses hard and fundamental problems for U.S. policy makers. There are no easy or pleasant solutions; the magnitude of the threat requires "thinking about the unthinkable" in a resolute and responsible manner. Although some readers may not agree with Gray's answers, he has illuminated neglected issues and elevated the level of the debate. □

EDITORIAL
(continued from page 5)

to appear; and the more conventional politicos are in their customary disarray.

The present government of Prime Minister Giovanni Spadolini is a groggy alliance of five political parties, each eyeing the exits. Few expect the scene to endure. So there is foreboding, but here initially there is always foreboding.

In the meantime some things are not so bad. As the European edition of *Time* magazine noted in an impressively knowledgeable report recently: "Italians survive in spite of a vast gap between them and their increasingly weak and ineffective governments. . . . The most astonishing aspect of Italian life today is how well people are living."

Italians lead all Europeans in ownership of second homes. Of the Western Europeans they import the most French champagne. Only the French guzzle more imported Scotch. The world's automobile industry may be in the doldrums, but Italian automobile sales are up 3.7 percent over last year. Nor are the Italians simply spendthrifts. They save a larger percentage of their incomes than any of their neighbors.

What the Italians have done is create a third economy, a submerged economy. The achievement, according to Italy's imperturbable sage, Luigi Barzini, is typically Italian. For as long as there has been an Italy, the Italian people have been presented with the same problem, he writes, "how to survive and possibly prosper in the midst of corruption . . . bloody tyrants, and their greedy courtiers." The tyrant today is not a bloody prince; rather, it is an idiotic rendering of the welfare state, and the courtiers are the greedy pols who nervously attempt to outdo each other in spectacles of generosity with no thought whatsoever for how this gorgeous gravy train is to be financed.

Then, too, the pols have been smilingly pliant before the demands of the country's top three trade union federations, so pliant in fact that in the 1970s Italian labor became Europe's most expensive—highly prone to absenteeism and to strikes. In response to this new tyranny the Italians now have their submerged economy.

Italian businesses have broken themselves down into their component parts, parts too small to be brought to ruin by the government's predatory labor and tax regulations. This decentralization—often encouraged by employees desirous of stable work conditions—has cut the cost of doing business in Italy and brought about Italy's mysterious prosperity. The state-owned industries lose money. The large corporations lose a little less money. The submerged economy prospers—at least until the government can lay hands on it.

Barzini writes that "Italy has never been as good as the sum of her people." Today her people have moved circumspectly around the snares of Italian government. The establishment of large efficient factories is impossible in Italy, so world-renowned designers such as Emilio Pucci contract their work out to small groups of craftsmen who often live in remote regions. Rome's greatest silversmiths and goldsmiths, the Mortets, create their beautiful artwork in a tiny studio at the back of an obscure courtyard. Later their creations are gathered up by the great houses of Bulgari, Petocchi, and Cartier, who sell them to the world. So vast has this decentralization process become that economists believe Italy's gross national product of $393 billion last year may have been under-reported by as much as 30 percent.

To live in Italy one must be prepared to adapt. Why does debris occasionally take wing from the windows of Rome? Possibly the municipal garbage collectors will have it no other way. How does one walk the streets of Rome? With caution—but still one walks, and thousands of Romans make their rounds unscathed. □

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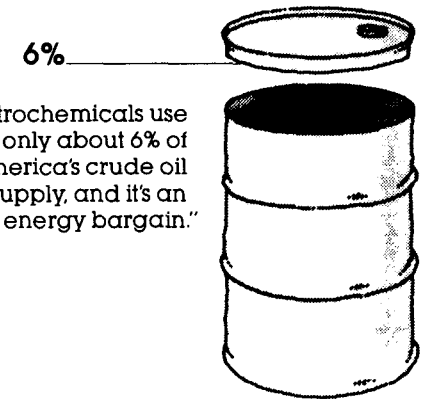

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